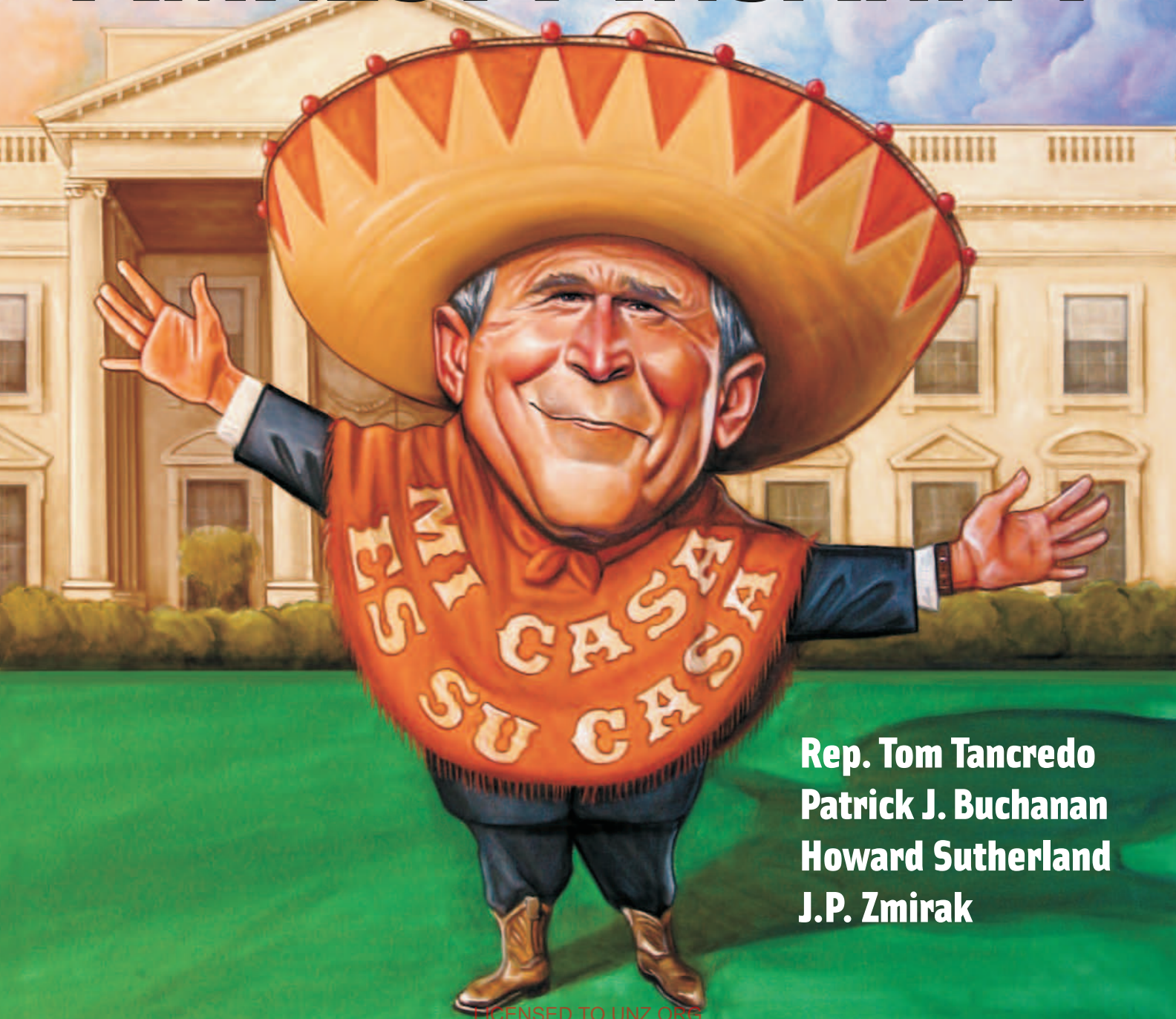


RETURN OF THE DRAFT? ■ BUSH'S SPENDING SPREE

FEBRUARY 16, 2004

The American Conservative

AMNESTY INSANITY



Rep. Tom Tancredo
Patrick J. Buchanan
Howard Sutherland
J.P. Zmirak

CLEARING THE AIR

I appreciate the opportunity to respond to the article by Charles Goyette (Feb. 2). While the article is disappointing and factually inaccurate, I defend his right to express his opinion. Charles has never been told by me or anyone in management to alter his position on the war.

In fact, on Feb. 10, 2003, he thanked me on the air for supporting him. An irate listener had protested Charles's views on the war and referred to KFYI as the "traitor station." My response, which Charles read on the air, was this: "Thank you for writing. I don't tell our hosts how to think. Dissent is healthy. It allows our listeners to hear a range of perspectives so they can draw their own conclusions. What sets our nation apart from others like Iraq is that we allow free exchange of viewpoints." Charles followed this with, "Nothing like management that backs you up."

I not only defended Charles's right to express his views, I assisted in efforts to market him as "the only conservative talk show host in America against the war." There weren't a lot of nibbles because, frankly, there wasn't a lot of sympathy for his views. At one point I asked Charles to take his scheduled vacation a day early so I could have a break from the tidal wave of complaints. Charles did not protest. In fact, he apologized for creating such a stir and then e-mailed me while on vacation to ask if he could take a few extra days.

Charles understood that his views might affect his ratings but proceeded anyway. While his ratings went up from winter to spring 2003, his 4-7 p.m. show underperformed other key programs. We made a business decision to hire Tom Liddy and Austin Hill for afternoons and move Charles to nights. This was a strategic move to add a hot new show in the afternoon while providing listeners with the only live, issues-driven night talk show in the Valley. Months

later, we can say with confidence that our moves are working. Ratings are up across the board, and Charles's status as a talk host on 550 KFYI is unchanged.

LAURIE CANTILLO
Program Director, KFYI
Phoenix, Ariz.

Charles Goyette responds:

Ms. Cantillo should know that the war didn't begin until March 19. It was thereafter that Clear Channel Regional Vice President Alan Sledge, in "you will do so" language, instructed me to refrain from expressing myself about the war and to transform my show from one of opinion to one of information only. I declined his kind offer.

I am afraid that this is all tempest-in-a-teapot business for most readers, and the larger point, about the entire nation—media executives included—being consumed by war hysteria on the basis of misleading representations, may be lost.

But one quick point for the sake of my professional reputation: Cantillo presents demographics out of context to suggest that I somehow underperformed in the ratings, in the same quarter for which Clear Channel actually paid me a bonus for ratings performance! Ironically, the new quarterly ratings have just been released. KFYI has turned in its worst ratings in well over a year, down overall 25 percent since I was moved out of prime time, with the "hot new show in the afternoon" collapsing even more dramatically.

CROSSOVER APPEAL

I'm a confirmed progressive and am working for the Dean campaign. I have also recently become a subscriber to your magazine because I find myself agreeing with much of what you say.

I'm fascinated by the thought that there is some convergence between liberals and conservatives. What I

detect is that there is a movement to institutionalize power in the hands of a few in this country. That movement is erroneously called "neoconservatism," which I suspect is designed to imply some sort of meta-conservative philosophy. However, it simply smacks of fascism, if one is to abide by the definition of the term.

It's too bad Pat Buchanan is not running for office. I think a lot of disenfranchised conservatives would prefer him over Bush. Actually, all of us would.

CHRISTOPHER ALAN
via e-mail

GOOD-BYE GOP

In 1960, I voted for the first time for JFK and for the last time for any Democrat. That is about to change.

As a conservative I believe in all the things you do and have appreciated your efforts at representing true conservatives. I never was part of the country-club Republican Party, and today's party could not be further from my beliefs.

I see little difference between arriving at Marxist socialism on Monday with the Democrats or Tuesday with the Republicans. Next November I will send the Republican Party a message. I am voting Democratic. Not only will the Republicans lose my vote, they now must find another vote to offset my Democratic vote. I am persuading other conservatives to vote in like manner. The sooner the Republicans can no longer pose as an alternative to the Democrats, the sooner this nation can return to being a constitutional Republic.

BILL RILEY
Moses Lake, Wash.

The American Conservative welcomes letters to the editor. Submit by e-mail to letters@amconmag.com, by fax to 703-875-3350, or by mail to 1300 Wilson Blvd., Suite 120, Arlington, VA 22209. Please include your name, address, and phone number. We reserve the right to edit all correspondence for space and clarity.



CHRIS HIERS

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A SORRY STATE

In his State of the Union address, President Bush wisely chose a rhetorical strategy of attack—a smarter course, surely, than trying to explain why so many of the things he highlighted in his last State of the Union turned out to be false. So no mention of Iraq's uranium purchases, no delving into the detailed compendium of anthrax and botulinum and mobile bio-weapons labs with which Bush had regaled previous audiences.

Now Bush stresses Iraq's "liberation"—and, of course, democracy. So naturally the president took a stab at those who are skeptical that Jeffersonian democracy can be transplanted in the Middle East: he believes, "God has planted in every human heart the desire to live in freedom," and Americans will fight a "forward strategy of freedom" in the Middle East. The language is attractive and good for applause. But one can clap harder if one forgets that Paul Bremer and the Iraq occupation team are now fighting a desperate effort to blunt the Iraqi Shi'ites' call for direct elections, soon. The Bush administration (rightly) fears that the freely elected Iraqi leader a Shi'ite-dominated electorate will produce will not be complacently pro-American.

[MILITARY]

TRAHISON DES CLERKS

Many might have called the invasion of Iraq a "detour" from the legitimate War on Terror, "a strategic error of the first order," an "unnecessary preventive war." But they do not teach at the Army War College's Institute for Strategic Studies. Jeffrey Record does, and in a courageous paper posted on the college's Web site, he argues that this "war of choice ... has created a new front in the Middle East for Islamic terrorism and diverted attention and resources



"IT'S NOTHING, MR. PRESIDENT...JUST SOME MORE IRRATIONAL CRITICISM FROM LEFT-WING KOOKS AND WEIRDOS..."

away from the security of the American homeland against further assault ..."

Tumbled through the Fox cycle, the counter-spin was predictable, "This chap is an analyst. ... he's not part of the actual War College itself. And there are lots of studies that come out. ... It is not the opinion of the War College."

But Record is no low-level drone. He's a visiting professor from the Air War College at Maxwell Air Force Base who worries that the force he trains has been brought "to the breaking point." He has written six books on military strategy, and the War College's commandant personally authorized this piece.

Gauzy visions of global democracy may suit Beltway ideologues for whom a strategic conflict is two cocktail parties on a single night. But those charged with building utopia where blood and mud meet are growing increasingly skeptical—and because of the honor that comes with their uniforms are unafraid to say so.

[SPIN]

CASE DISMISSED

It is perhaps too much to hope that the *Weekly Standard's* next cover will read, "Reversed On Appeal," but recent intelligence breakthroughs make a mockery

of that magazine's triumphant Nov. 24, 2003, headline, "Case Closed." The charge was collaboration between Saddam's Iraq and Osama's al-Qaeda. The smoking gun was to be a secret Pentagon memo, written by Undersecretary of Defense Douglas Feith and slipped to the *Standard* to complete the neocon spin cycle.

Trouble is, Saddam didn't get the memo. A message written by him after his ouster, and found by the military after his capture, tells a rather different story. Even as jihadis crossed the border to join the resistance, Iraq's former president preached caution to his faithful. "Mr. Hussein apparently believed that the foreign Arabs, eager for a holy war against the West, had a different agenda from the Baathists, who were eager for their own return to power," reports the *New York Times*. And according to CIA interviews with senior al-Qaeda prisoners, the other side of the putative partnership was equally wary. The *Times* again: "[B]efore the American-led invasion, Osama bin Laden had rejected entreaties from top lieutenants to work jointly with Mr. Hussein."

A Saddam-Osama alliance, and the association with 9/11 it conjured, was a central argument in the protean case for

pre-emptive war. Though shouted down, antiwar realists objected that the secularist and the Islamist distrusted, and even despised, each other. It now appears that not even a common enemy's invasion could force them to unite. Vindication would be sweet, were it not for the American lives the rush to war has cost.

[ELECTION]

REMEMBER

BARBARA JORDAN

President Bush's amnesty proposal poses an interesting dilemma for the Democrats seeking to challenge him: are Kerry, Edwards, Dean, and Clark more interested in electoral victory or in maintaining doctrinal purity and holding fast to their party's multicultural coalition of identity-politics advocacy groups?

Thus far, the typical Democratic response to the Bush proposal has been that it doesn't go far or rapidly enough in legalizing illegals and tearing holes in America's borders. While this is not especially surprising during the left-dominated primary season, there seemed something ritualistic and not especially heartfelt about the reaction. Whatever statements their campaigns released, no Democrat actively campaigned in Iowa, to our knowledge, by slamming Bush for not granting citizenship fast enough to illegal aliens.

The test will come as spring turns to summer. Millions of Americans oppose the Bush plan: 52 percent oppose amnesty for Mexicans; 57 percent oppose amnesty for illegals from other countries. Most of them are Republicans—63 percent by one poll. Quite a few of these voters would abandon Bush on this issue, if given an alternative. It might even be said that disaffected Republicans who want credible control over American borders are the weak link in the Bush electoral coalition

and the key to any effort to break it down. So the question for the Democrats: would they rather pander to the Hispanic and open-borders lobbies or defeat George W. Bush?

[CULTURE]

YOUNGEST VICTIMS

2004, like every other year of the Bush administration, is already a disappointment for conservatives, and the grassroots have begun to stir. Few have received such scant attention as social conservatives: on the federal marriage amendment, Bush has been evasive; on abortion, he has failed to lead. To ensure his re-election, the president must reassure his base, lest it stay home or cast its votes in protest.

But there is still time, and opportunity. The Unborn Victims of Violence Act, for instance, would empower federal prosecutors to charge those who harm pregnant women for the injuries to both mother and baby. Called "Laci and Conner's Law" after the celebrated Peterson murder case, the legislation would give justice to those like Tracy Owen, a pregnant Tennessean executed by two illegal aliens as she lay fallen in a vacant lot. Of the five fatal bullets that tore through her body, one struck and killed her full-term child. According to a *Newsweek* poll, 84 percent of Americans call that murder.

Twice before this bill has passed the House, but never has it seen the light of day across the Capitol. Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-Tenn.) promises action, and President Bush should hold him to it—for Conner Peterson's grandmother, Sharon Rocha, sums up the cost of failure: "Congress would be saying that Conner and other innocent unborn victims like him ... never existed at all. But our grandson did live. He had a name, he was loved, and his life was violently taken from him before he ever saw the sun." ■

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Kiss The Old America Good-Bye

The Bush amnesty for 8 to 12 million illegal aliens is more than a dereliction of his constitutional duty to enforce America's laws. It is an admission by President

Bush that the Third-Worldization of America is inevitable and unstoppable.

For what Mr. Bush is saying is this: We cannot stop the invasion. We can no longer defend the borders. It is hopeless. So let us make the best of it by pardoning the lawbreakers and gate-crashers, legalizing the coming invasion, and welcoming the entire family of any "guest worker" who can find a job.

Mexican President Vicente Fox may be yowling for open borders. Bush is delivering them. Amnesty means not only that all the millions of illegals already here stay, but also millions more will be coming now that they know America's gates are unguarded and no one gets sent back. By 2050, America will be a different country.

What will she look like? Like the California of today—only much more so. Americans of European descent will be less than half the U.S. population and a rapidly shrinking minority. As late as 1960 they were about 90 percent.

America's southern border will be effectively erased. In the border states of California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas, Latinos with roots in Mexico, whose first loyalty is there, will be the new majority, as is already true of California's public schools.

With near-zero immigration from Europe, with birth rates among immigrants the highest in the nation, with every child of a guest worker entitled to U.S. citizenship and all the benefits of our welfare state, America will be a Third World country not only in its ethnic and racial composition but also in

the socioeconomic profile she presents.

We will look less like the *Affluent Society* of 1957 of which J.K. Galbraith wrote, than like Brazil with its huge disparities of wealth. For, as with California, the native-born who are pouring out of the Golden State each year are taxpayers, and the immigrants, legal and illegal, who are crowding in are tax consumers.

With their wages at or near the minimum, these immigrant poor will depend on government for health care, food stamps, earned-income credits, welfare, rent supplements, legal services.

Mass immigration, and its social and economic ramifications, is what has bankrupted California and why she may have reached a tipping point from which there is no return. For her taxpayers are fleeing for two reasons, neither of which is likely to change.

First, the state no longer looks like the golden land in which they grew up. The social change has been too rapid, too radical. So they pack up and move to places where they feel more at home.

Second, the influx of immigrant poor and the exodus of the middle class means repeated hikes in tax rates and continuous cuts in social services, making life ever harsher for middle-class folks who stick it out. So they too soon head for the highways out.

In Bush's last budget, he was forced to include \$20 billion to help states balance their books. Just as many Third World nations would go belly up without regular transfusions of IMF and World Bank money, many states may come to depend on federal bailouts.

Consider education. Americans are puzzled as to why test scores fall each year, no matter how much we spend to improve schools. There is no secret to it. The students entering those schools are less and less equipped to succeed academically.

In California, a majority of the children in public schools are now of Hispanic descent. They come to school less proficient in English. Many come from immigrant families with no tradition of learning. Their aptitude for educational achievement, measured by test scores, is far below that of the average American school kid.

As these children make up ever increasing percentages of the entering classes in our public schools, average test scores will continue to fall, no matter how much we spend.

Then, there is growing potential for the disuniting of America of which Arthur Schlesinger wrote.

The old immigrants came here to become Americans. The tough-love country to which they came demanded they do so. In those melting pots of Americanization, the public and parochial schools of the early 20th century, the young were immersed in our language, literature, history, heroes, traditions, customs, faith, myths—and came to know and love them.

Nothing like that takes place in multicultural America, where the old heroes are trashed as genocidal racists, the old history has become one long recital of America's sins, Christmas and Easter become winter and spring break, and July 4th gives way to Cinco de Mayo.

Courtesy of Bush and the Big Tent Republicans, it is Bye, Bye, Miss American Pie. ■

[there shall be open borders]

Amnesty Insanity

Bush throws an immigration party—and the whole world is invited.

By Howard Sutherland

THIS PAST CHRISTMAS, George W. Bush decided to give the world a present: America.

It may be the most radical proposal any American president has ever made. President Bush will soon urge the Congress to grant the right to live and work here to millions of illegal aliens and invite an open-ended number of foreigners to come to America to do “jobs Americans won’t do.” Effectively, the United States will become a global job and welfare office.

The president claims his proposal is not an amnesty, that it will reduce illegal immigration and that it will enhance America’s homeland security. He is wrong on every count.

The atmospherics with which the Bush plan was introduced suggest the White House’s political motivations. After a preview conference call in which administration officials could not give credible answers about how the proposal would work, President Bush rolled it out at a press conference, flanked by open-borders Republican congressmen and leaders of Hispanic pressure groups. (All the invitees the president greeted were from Hispanic groups, though—unlike his pre-Sept.-11th amnesty proposal meant only for

Mexicans—the new proposal embraces all illegal aliens.)

In a telling slip, the president greeted Tony Garza, the U.S. ambassador to Mexico, as “*El Embajador* of Mexico” before expatiating on the unique virtues of immigrants. He lamented seeing “millions of hard-working men and women condemned to fear and uncertainty in a massive undocumented economy.” Bush was speaking of illegal aliens, engaged in serial violation of laws the president is sworn to enforce, not the unemployed Americans whose numbers have been growing throughout his term.

Not surprisingly, the administration took pains to deny that its proposal was an amnesty. Open-borders advocates always prefer euphemisms: “normalization,” “legalization,” “earned regularization.” But the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines amnesty as “a general overlooking or pardon of past offences by the ruling authority.” Illegal entry and visa overstay are federal crimes. Amnesty would be anything more lenient than prosecution and imprisonment for criminal trespass. But by Bush’s logic, only the granting of automatic citizenship to illegals would constitute an amnesty; any measure short of that would be perfectly acceptable. The Bush

proposal would allow people who have broken into the United States to stay for an indefinite time and put down roots, avail themselves of the American welfare state, and have children whom our government would consider American citizens with the right to begin importing their relatives. By any definition, this is amnesty.

The administration claims that enactment of the Bush proposal would facilitate enforcement of American immigration laws. Historical experience and common sense argue the opposite. The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986—also sold as a measure to gain control over our borders—gave amnesty to 2.7 million illegals. But illegal immigration increased markedly in the aftermath of the act, as the family and friends of the newly legal rushed in. One amnesty suggests that the country has difficulty in enforcing the law; one every few years suggests the supposed law is a dead letter. Since 1986, America’s illegal-alien population has at least trebled. In subsequent years, Congress has passed piecemeal amnesties, and each has attracted more illegal immigrants.

President Bush claims his amnesty differs from previous ones because his is a guest-worker program, and the

guests will be temporary—with status renewable every three years. But the United States had guest-worker programs before—the *bracero* programs of the World War II and postwar years—enacted because so many American men were off at war. Predictably, the program became a spur to illegal immigration as guest workers brought their families in. Middle Eastern guest workers have done the same throughout Western Europe, while spurring a parallel surge of illegal immigration. When President Eisenhower recognized the *bracero* programs were creating an alien field-worker underclass, he initiated Operation Wetback (can one imagine such a term being used today?) and sent the illegal aliens packing.

A second component of the Bush argument is that national security requires an accurate accounting of everyone here, a task that cannot be accomplished until the illegals “come out into the sunlight.” But since the Sept. 11 attacks, this administration has actually permitted immigration to increase—allowing over one million legal immigrants while winking at the entry of some 500,000 illegals.

Rather than enforcing the laws on the books, Homeland Security chief Tom Ridge prefers “to come to grips with the presence of 8 to 12 million illegals, afford them some kind of legal status.” Then, says Ridge, “as a country [we] decide what our immigration policy is and then enforce it.”

But amnesty undermines the law and its enforcement. It mocks the millions of would-be immigrants who play by the rules, often waiting for years for visas to live in the United States legally. And it threatens to overwhelm the agencies charged with maintaining the integrity of the present system. American Border Patrol agents regularly put their lives on the line combating smugglers and illegal aliens. Now Bush has told them, in

effect, that they needn't have bothered.

Already the border-patrol and visa systems are overstretched, unable effectively to keep track of a huge volume of legal immigrants and to weed out the dangerous ones. Recall, for example, the case of Mir Amal Kansi, a Pakistani who entered the U.S. legally in 1990, applied for political asylum two years later, and then murdered two CIA agents at their Virginia headquarters in 1993. Or Mohamed Atta, who came and went repeatedly before flying a plane into the World Trade Center. Mahmud Abouhalima gained amnesty as a farm worker under the 1986 law before leading the first World Trade Center attack. Having illegal-alien terrorists inside the United States is bad; terrorists with legal status pose a far more serious problem—as they can travel easily in and out of the country. The Center of Immigration Studies' Mark Krikorian notes, “Another amnesty is guaranteed—*guaranteed*—to give legal residence to a future terrorist.”

Nor is the lawless immigrant problem limited to terrorism. In an article in *City Journal*, Heather Mac Donald surveys some of the chaos left in the wake of a border-enforcement system emasculated by pro-immigration lobbyists. In Los Angeles, 95 percent of all outstanding warrants for homicide target illegal aliens. A California Justice Department study notes that 60 percent of the 20,000-man 18th Street Gang is made up of illegals. This small army co-operates with the Mexican Mafia in drug distribution and drive-by assassinations. Colombia's Lil' Cycos gang controls the drug market around LA's MacArthur Park; most of its members are illegal aliens. A similar pattern exists in the New York City and Miami drug gangs. And yet, as Mac Donald elucidates, Los Angeles, New York, and other major cities, under the pressure of the immigration advocates, have enacted “sanctuary” policies

that deny the police the power even to inquire about the immigration status of gang members.

Now President Bush, instead of trying to break the illegal-alien crime wave, proposes to capitulate to it.

While the Bush proposal to legalize the illegals has attracted the most notice, it may be that American wage levels and social structure would be more affected in the long run by his desire to open the nation's borders to *any* foreigner with a job offer from a U.S. employer. This is a striking recommendation, one with the potential fully to globalize the American job market and essentially wipe out the distinctions between American citizens and foreigners on a worldwide basis.

In short, the Bush plan envisions extension of the temporary-worker status not only to illegal aliens who already have jobs here but also to potential workers from all over the world. Any of the six billion people on earth—millions of whom earn wages lower than Mexico's—could become temporary workers.

As Bush put it, “this program will offer legal status, as temporary workers, to the millions of undocumented men and women now employed in the United States and to those in foreign countries who seek to participate in the program.” All that would be required is a job offer that meets the minimum wage. Administration officials claim that a “market-place test” is sufficient to determine whether an American is available to fill a certain job—meaning the very fact that an illegal alien is holding the job is evidence that no American wants it. This is a transparently lax test, evidencing the administration's scant concern for the American unemployed.

The Bush proposal seems designed to encourage a proliferation of minimum-wage jobs that few Americans would be eager to take. A full-time employee at

Amnesty on the Floor

By Rep. Tom Tancredo

the current minimum wage makes \$10,712 a year, well under the official poverty line. (American taxpayers would inevitably be required to subsidize much of the difference in social-welfare payments.) If the plan is enacted, one can easily envision poor temporary workers from Mexico being undercut by even poorer temporary workers from Bangladesh more desperate to work for low wages.

Unlike previous guest-worker programs, which focused on agricultural labor, the Bush plan would not be limited to particular industries. Any employer could offer foreigners jobs that could not be filled by an American at the minimum wage. The program is a bonanza for employers who do not want to pay their employees a living wage. Already the impact of high immigration has savagely reduced the wages of working-class Americans, but the two million low-skilled Americans who have been displaced from their jobs in the past decade are—if the Bush plan is passed in anything like its proposed form—only a down payment on what will be a full-scale Third Worldization of the American labor market.

Polls over many years consistently show that majorities of Americans want legal immigration reduced and illegal immigration stopped. Twenty years ago, Sen. Alan Simpson (R-Wyo.) said, “Americans are fed up with efforts to make them feel that [they] do not have the fundamental right of any people—to decide who will join them and help them form the future country in which they and their posterity will live.” By pushing an acceleration of mass immigration, President Bush has joined those who wish to deny Americans that fundamental right of sovereignty.

The question, likely to be explored extensively in the coming months, is why. One probable explanation is Karl

Congress is unlikely to send President Bush any legislation this year that would contain both components of the administration’s radical new immigration proposal: an amnesty for millions of illegal aliens and an open-ended guest-worker program.

Given the overwhelming public hostility to amnesties, Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), an ally of the president on immigration policy, probably had it right when he told a Lexington, Ky., radio audience on Jan. 15 that he didn’t think the president’s plan would pass as long as amnesty remains part of it.

Opposition to the amnesty component of the president’s plan will be strongest in the House of Representatives, where there are enough legislators—mostly Republican—committed to a more modern and moderate immigration policy to sink any legislation that would grant legal status to illegal aliens without requiring that they first return home and apply to enter the United States legally like everyone else.

Although a principled opposition to the president’s amnesty proposal would be squarely in line with the wishes of American voters (not to mention the rule of law), many Republican legislators will be reluctant to oppose a major new policy initiative launched by a Republican administration at the start of an election year.

On the other hand, in spite a recent finding by the Pew Research Center that three out of four rank-and-file Democrats want tighter immigration policies, Democrats in Congress will probably remain generally united in opposition to the president’s plan on the grounds that it doesn’t go far enough on amnesty. Gaining Democratic Party support for the initiative, particularly from its powerful ethnic-identity wing, would require removing even the few feeble restrictions on the amnesty the White House has suggested—a move that would kill the initiative with House moderates.

Because it will be easier for the White House to sell a guest-worker plan to the public than an amnesty plan, however, immigration moderates should be concerned by the very real threat of a bad guest-worker bill making it through Congress and back to the president’s desk this session. Lawmakers who might otherwise be unenthusiastic about amnesties and massive immigration in general might still fall for the bogus claim that American businesses “need” cheap foreign labor.

Especially worrisome is the possibility that immigration moderates in Congress, presented with the president’s radical guest-worker plan, but with all the bad amnesty stuff stripped away, might be tempted to take the “compromise” as a victory and vote for it.

Even so, it is still fairly unlikely that a straight amnesty-free guest-worker program would get through Congress, as unions and pro-worker Democrats and Republicans—especially in the Senate—will resist any plan that essentially turns U.S. immigration policy over to business interests and New World Order extremists.

The upshot is that I do not think we are going to see any of the president’s proposal succeed this year.

Congressman Tom Tancredo represents the Sixth District of Colorado and heads the Congressional Immigration Reform Caucus.

Exacting Concessions

By J.P. Zmirak

President Bush's amnesty plan deserves decisive defeat. But if immigration realists can't stop it outright, they should seek to blunt its worst consequences. Here's a short list of reforms that our leaders might try to tack onto the Bush amnesty bill—either to make the legislation so unpalatable to Democrats that it will fail or to make the result less destructive.

- Phase out family reunification as a basis for legal immigration. Our immigration law now allows U.S. residents to sponsor adult siblings, parents, and grown-up children, giving them preferential treatment in applying for residency. Skills, education, employability—all criteria for admitting immigrants—are trumped by nepotism. Any immigrant admitted to the U.S. after the amnesty bill should no longer be able to offer his foreign relatives, excepting spouses or children under 15, an advantage. To make this politically palatable, leave a “grandfather” provision giving current U.S. residents two years to sponsor whatever relations they wish, then close that window too.
- Militarize the U.S. southern border. The entire border with Mexico is an open door through which terrorists could walk at will. On Nov. 14, Reuters reported on a Mexican gang that specializes in helping Arabs enter the U.S. To cut down both on the influx of illegal immigrants from Mexico, and the deaths caused by “people smugglers” in the desert, we should re-deploy to the Rio Grande a significant portion of the American forces now guarding Germany from the defunct Soviet Union. We might also construct military bases along the border, conducting training of future soldiers in a desert environment—as our policymakers seem determined to continue deploying them throughout the Middle East.
- Tie acceptance of immigrants from a particular country to its policies in the War on Terror. The State Department should be required to certify annually whether a given country is co-operating with the U.S. in apprehending and prosecuting terrorists. Countries that do not should find themselves unable to export their excess population, political dissidents, or radical clerics. Of course, the usual background checks should be applied to make sure that countries aren't “solving” their problems with terrorists by sending them here.
- Instruct the Attorney General that Congress expects criminal prosecutions of illegal aliens to be followed by civil suits against employers who break the law—using the Racketeer Influenced Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act to obtain triple damages.
- Offer immediate amnesty and legal residency (after a background check) to any illegal immigrant who reports his employer to the U.S. government, resulting in a successful prosecution. This should drain the swamp of corporate greed that is one of the causes of our immigration problem.
- Link future immigration totals to the U.S. birthrate. Our nation's population growth is fueled exclusively by immigration. A rise in the U.S. birthrate should result in a proportional reduction in the immigration totals for the next decade, aiming not at population stability, but at a manageable rate of growth—instead of the migration-fueled population explosion we are witnessing.

J.P. Zmirak writes from New York City.

Rove's strategy of wooing Hispanic voters by pandering to Mexico. (Vicente Fox has boasted in Mexico that the latest Bush proposal is actually his idea.)

Another is a desire for campaign funds from businesses hungry for cheap labor and eager to undercut the going American wage rates.

A third: President Bush is a sincere multiculturalist with a special affection for Mexico—which he sees an ally on par with Great Britain and Canada, a sentiment, incidentally, that is hardly grounded in American historical experience.

Should President Bush's proposal become law, what would become of America? Population growth, already fueled largely by recent immigrants and their children, would explode. The guest-worker program has no limits or quotas—it is open to the world. As wage levels are largely driven by supply and demand, the wages of Americans would drop as new “temporary workers” pour in to work for minimum-wage jobs. The Bush plan would accelerate the demographic transformation of the United States that has already begun and very likely fuel racial and ethnic tensions whose shape we can't even imagine. In social norms, America would resemble less and less a middle-class society and more and more a kind of multiethnic strife-torn Brazil, with its upper classes protected in gated communities with armed guards. Driven further from its roots, the social consensus that made our federal republic possible could fast unravel.

But spouting rosy Ellis Island rhetoric, Bush plunges forward. One thing is certain: no conservative would advocate such a leap into the dark, but we have long known that George W. Bush is no conservative. ■

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[original intent]

Fathers Knew Best

The founders' words refute the "nation of immigrants" myth.

By Thomas E. Woods Jr.

IMMIGRATION, PERHAPS MORE than any other issue today, reveals the chasm that so often exists between "democracy" and the actual will of the people. Polls consistently find solid majorities of Americans in favor of immigration reductions, yet the problem grows more severe and out of control each year.

Every morning on my way to work, I drive by a 7-Eleven in Farmingville, N.Y., where a large group of, um, "undocumented" Mexicans can be found waiting to be hired out for day jobs. Perhaps 50 feet down the road is a small group holding signs reading "Deport Illegal Aliens." Drivers wave and honk in support, but still those who profess to govern us do absolutely nothing to secure our borders.

One of the ways in which pro-immigration propagandists have sought to attain the moral high ground is by the implicit suggestion that the right of immigration is a hallowed national principle that no loyal American can consistently oppose. Yet this usually unexamined premise is actually false. The Founding Fathers were generally wary of immigration, a phenomenon that they did not wish to exclude altogether but that they saw no particular need to encourage, especially among migrants whose cultural backgrounds were significantly different from their own.

Consider Benjamin Franklin, that

well-known cosmopolite and child of the Enlightenment. Franklin, it turns out, said quite a few politically incorrect things about non-British humanity. On one occasion he asked, "Why should Pennsylvania, founded by the English, become a colony of aliens, who will shortly be so numerous as to Germanize us, instead of our Anglifying them, and will never adopt our language or customs any more than they can acquire our complexion?" Thus immigrants of sufficient number and concentration could radically change the cultural landscape in ways that the native population may not want.

We can already hear the modern liberal laughing at Franklin, pointing triumphantly to German assimilation in America as proof that the Pennsylvanian's concerns were utterly without merit. But the point here is simply this: if unrestricted immigration had really been a traditional American principle, someone must have forgotten to tell Benjamin Franklin. And he was speaking of people who, as fellow heirs and architects of Western civilization, shared a great deal in common with the original settlers of British America. One can only imagine what Franklin would have had to say of the Third World onslaught caused by our current immigration policy.

Thomas Jefferson's warning in his *Notes on Virginia* would doubtless

come as a surprise to most Americans, since most American history textbooks for some reason choose not to highlight it. Jefferson asked, suggestively, "Are there no inconveniences to be thrown into the scale against the advantage expected by a multiplication of numbers by the importation of foreigners?"

"It is for the happiness of those united in society," the sage of Monticello went on to explain, "to harmonize as much as possible, in matters which they must of necessity transact together. Civil government being the sole object of forming societies, its administration must be conducted by common consent." Our government was "a composition of the freest principles of the English Constitution, with others, derived from natural right and reason." Nothing could be more opposed to the principles of our government than those of absolute monarchies, said Jefferson. But it was from such regimes that we could expect the most immigrants.

Such immigrants, Jefferson feared, would "bring with them the principles of the governments they leave, imbibed in their early youth; or, if able to throw them off, it will be in exchange for an unbounded licentiousness, passing, as is usual, from one extreme to another. It would be a miracle were they to stop precisely at the point of temperate liberty." The effects of a large influx of population

from places without any experience with our kind of government and society could only introduce confusion and discord. "These principles, with their language, they will transmit to their children. In proportion to their numbers, they will share with us the legislation. They will infuse into it their spirit, warp and bias its direction, and render it a heterogeneous, incoherent, distracted mass."

Jefferson concluded that it was "safer" to wait patiently for the natural increase of the American population rather than achieve such increase by mass immigration, and that our government would, as a result, be more peaceable and more durable. He left readers with a useful thought experiment: "Suppose 20 millions of republican Americans thrown all of a sudden into France, what would be the condition of that kingdom? If it would be more turbulent, less happy, less strong, we may believe that the addition of half a million of foreigners to our present numbers would produce a similar effect here."

Jefferson was joined in his wariness by Alexander Hamilton, the nation's first secretary of the treasury. In his draft of a speech for George Washington, Hamilton wrote: "To render the people of this country as homogeneous as possible,

earlier sentiments from the *Notes on Virginia*. (This lapse in Jefferson's judgment appears to have been of partisan origin: Jefferson himself, along with several of his prominent opponents, believed that the foreign vote had won him the election of 1800.) He agreed with Jefferson that it was praiseworthy for the United States to permit the entry of those experiencing genuine hardship and seeking asylum, though even here Hamilton would have reminded his fellow citizens that generosity has its limitations if the welfare of the country is to be protected. What he objected to was the suggestion that all such people were necessarily entitled to the privileges of citizenship. He concluded by pointing out that even granting for the sake of argument that American Indians had extended nothing but friendship as the colonists arrived on these shores, it is instructive to consider the fate of a people whose policy was so magnanimous. "[P]rudence requires us," Hamilton wrote, "to trace the history further and ask what has become of the nations of savages who exercised this policy, and who now occupies the territory which they then inhabited? Perhaps a lesson is here taught which ought not to be despised."

family." He then drew out the obvious implications of this point:

The influx of foreigners must, therefore, tend to produce a heterogeneous compound; to change and corrupt the national spirit; to complicate and confound public opinion; to introduce foreign propensities. In the composition of society, the harmony of the ingredients is all-important, and whatever tends to a discordant intermixture must have an injurious tendency.

For Hamilton, immigration policy was a matter of prudence and good sense, not a moral imperative. He observed at the turn of the 19th century, "[I]n the infancy of the country, with a boundless waste to people, it was politic to give a facility to naturalization; but our situation is now changed. It appears from the last census that we have increased about one third in ten years; after allowing for what we have gained from abroad, it will be quite apparent that the natural progress of our own population is sufficiently rapid for strength, security, and settlement."

Writing to John Adams in 1794, George Washington contended that the United States had no real reason to encourage immigration. Washington said that "except of useful mechanics and some particular descriptions of men or professions, there is no need of encouragement [of immigration], while the policy or advantage of its taking place in a body (I mean the settling of them in a body) may be much questioned; for, by so doing, they retain the Language, habits, and principles (good or bad) which they bring with them."

Rufus King, who had attended the Constitutional Convention as a delegate from Massachusetts, was concerned about the character of the immigrants whom America may attract. He wrote in

WRITING TO JOHN ADAMS, **GEORGE WASHINGTON CONTENDED THAT THE UNITED STATES HAD NO REASON TO ENCOURAGE IMMIGRATION.**

must tend as much as any other circumstance to the permanence of their union and posterity." (Who kept forgetting to tell our forefathers of the benefits of mass immigration?)

Several years later, when Jefferson called for liberalizing the naturalization laws in his December 1801 message to Congress, Hamilton recalled Jefferson's

Hamilton described the safety of a republic as depending "essentially on the energy of a common national sentiment; on a uniformity of principles and habits; on the exemption of the citizens from foreign bias, and prejudice; and on that love of country which will almost invariably be found to be closely connected with birth, education, and

a 1798 letter, “[I]t was the practice of the Emigrants from Scotland to bring with them Certificates from the religious Societies to which they belonged, of their honesty, sobriety, and generally of their good Character! Why should we not require some such Document from all Emigrants, and it would be well to add to the Testimonial that the person to whom it was granted was not expelled from his Country and had not been convicted of any crime.” He wondered, “If from the emigrations of past time we have suffered inconvenience and our true national character has been disfigured, what are we to expect from the Emigrants of the present Day?”

John Jay, who would become the first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, in *Federalist* No. 2 positively celebrated the fact that for all its “diversity,” the United States consisted essentially of people whose religious and cultural traits were broadly similar and compatible, rather than widely divergent and a potential threat to social comity. “Providence,” he wrote, “has been pleased to give this one connected country to one united people—a people descended from the same ancestors, speaking the same language, professing the same religion, attached to the same principles of government, very similar in their manners and customs.”

According to Professor Thomas G. West of the University of Dallas, “None of the Founders gave a theoretical account of the right of a political community to exclude would-be immigrants. That is because such a right was obvious to all as an inference from the general principles they all shared. No one in the early debates in Congress on the naturalization laws doubted the government’s right to determine exclusionary criteria for citizenship.”

At the Constitutional Convention, for example, New York’s Gouverneur Morris warned of being “polite at the

expense of prudence.” He noted that the privileges that emigrants enjoyed in the United States were considerably greater than in the rest of the world but concluded by reminding his listeners that “every Society from a great Nation down to a Club had the right of declaring the conditions on which new members should be admitted.”

Decades ago, proof that the Founders did not approve of mass immigration might have been an argument in favor of rethinking current immigration policy. Today, the politically correct automatons who inhabit our nation’s universities would be more likely to conclude that the Founding Fathers were racists whose views should be of no account.

But if the Founding Fathers were racists for opposing mass immigration, so is virtually everyone in the vast bulk of the nations of the world right now since hardly any country outside the self-destructive West favors immigration that would undermine and overwhelm the social and cultural features that make their nations unique. The Founders recommended the kind of prudence and common sense that any nation observes in its immigration policy. If only the Bush administration would listen. ■

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Spending Like a Drunken Democrat

Bush drives the nation towards bankruptcy.

By Peter Eavis

FORGET THE LIBERATION of Iraq, George W. Bush will be remembered as the president who bankrupted America.

Every president of the past 40 years has contributed to the dire fiscal problems from which the United States now suffers. Bush, however, by massively increasing government spending and doing nothing to reduce the looming burden of Social Security and Medicare, will receive more blame than any of his predecessors.

A quick run through the numbers shows why future generations, weighed down by a national debt that is now

growing at \$1.8 billion a day, will look back in bewilderment, wondering why Bush, despite Republican majorities in both houses of Congress, decided to go for broke.

Under his administration, the national debt has gone up a stunning 24 percent, to \$7 trillion. A chief reason for that increase is that Bush has enthusiastically promoted an explosion in government spending. In 2004, federal government outlays are expected to exceed \$2.3 trillion, which is \$500 billion more than in 2000. At nearly \$500 billion, the budget deficit is close to 4.5 percent of

gross domestic product, the sort of ratio usually seen in developing countries that are about to implode. Contrary to the White House's absurd projections, private economists expect annual deficits of between \$400 billion and \$600 billion over the next 10 years.

According to recent research, it's not as if budget questions lack urgency. Medicare and Social Security are underfunded to the tune of \$43 trillion. Both programs are in need of immediate reform, as Baby Boomers will soon start hitting retirement age. Yet Bush further bloated the Medicare imbalance in December with a new drug plan costing at least \$400 billion over 10 years. As for Social Security, Bush made reform of this entitlement program a centerpiece of his election campaign. He even told former Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill that his Social Security plans were "what got me elected," according to Ron Suskind's *Price of Loyalty*. But, beyond forming a special commission, Bush has done nothing to further restructuring of Social Security, which casts doubt on any promises he makes on this subject in the 2004 re-election campaign.

One shocking aspect of the past three years is that so many prominent conservatives don't seem to care that Bush has splurged like crazy and added over \$1 trillion to the nation's debt in the process. The Republican Party in Congress, despite an ill-deserved reputation for favoring fiscal discipline, has done nothing to prevent Bush from dragging us into a fiscal morass. Instead, the GOP has participated wholeheartedly in Bush's LBJ-like largesse. Its swing away from fiscal first principles has been breathtaking. The last big spending bill that went through Congress was so full of pork that the Republicans who voted for it deserve the fate of the Gadarene swine.

Of course, there are plenty of hack conservative pundits out there to argue

fervently for Bush's fiscal policy. They rightly champion the president for enacting tax cuts, but they seem unfazed that his spending will have to be financed by higher taxes if it doesn't stop now. Bush's defenders also downplay the seriousness of the budget deficit and claim it was unavoidable after 9/11. Nonsense, of course, but dangerous nonsense nonetheless because it gives the impression that the Right, which has won nearly all the key economic debates of the last 20 years, is fully onboard Bush's sinking ship.

Some Bush Republicans still pay lip service to the principles of fiscal conservatism but in the same hollow manner that the Soviet leaders spoke of "people's democracy." And Bush is expected to throw fiscal conservatives a bone or two in his budget for the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 2005, set to go to Congress on Feb. 2. The president cannot be trusted, though. He displays no sign that he can stop his fiscal folly. As a result, it may take a brutal intervention by the market to put a stop to spending. To be sure, in an election year no one is in the mood to listen to the complaints of fiscal conservatives demanding spending cuts. But when the markets start beating up on this country, ears will open, and the pro-Bush arguments will wilt.

The main argument advanced in defense of Bush's fiscal policy is that his budget deficits have been thrust upon him by events like 2001's terror attacks, the economic slowdown, and the campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq. But while the budget position was obviously going to worsen after 9/11, Bush has caused it to deteriorate to a point where the deficit is actually a threat to the security of the nation's economy. If another 9/11-type event were to occur, the economy would be much less resilient than it was in 2001, due in part to the fiscal imbalance.

The nasty truth is that Bush was a reckless spendthrift from the get-go.

Many on the Left said that the closeness of the 2000 election result demanded of Bush that he govern from the center. Immediately, he went the extra mile and started ruling like a big-government Democrat, spending billions in the process. One example was Bush's early desire to pour money into the public-education system, which will only entrench its problems. Since 2001, education spending has surged by over 50 percent to \$61 billion. And Bush kept squandering long after it became apparent to everyone outside the administration that deficits were going to deepen. As the libertarian-leaning Cato Institute points out, the \$400 billion for Medicare prescription drugs is more than double the sum Bush first requested in his 2002 budget.

Looking at spending unrelated to defense and so-called mandatory outlays like Social Security and Medicare reveals Bush's inherent need to splurge. This exercise also blows away the attempts of some on the Right to compare Bush's deficits with Reagan's. In inflation-adjusted dollars, Bush increased non-defense discretionary spending by 20.8 percent in his first three years, versus a 13.5 percent cut under Reagan's first three years, according to Cato.

Indeed, Bush's decision to go for butter as well as guns puts him at odds not only with Reagan, but also Lyndon Johnson, long demonized by the Right for ushering in the welfare era. Johnson made substantial cuts in Great Society spending in order to afford the mounting costs of the Vietnam War. Because Bush has done the opposite, even in the unlikely event that the U.S. manages to cut back defense spending in five years, the government will still have big fiscal problems to deal with.

And the chances of a big reduction in defense spending are slim because this administration will find any excuse to throw money at the defense establishment. In fact, there is an intriguing

episode described in the Suskind/O'Neill book that suggests that Bush would have increased defense spending even without 9/11.

In the very first month of the Bush administration, Donald Rumsfeld sent O'Neill a memo that recommended a giant increase in defense spending to deal with what Rumsfeld saw as new threats to America. The defense secretary also bemoaned the effect of President Clinton's "procurement holiday" on transport and weapons systems, according to O'Neill. To address these needs, Rumsfeld requested that spending be increased by between \$255 billion and \$842 billion over the next five years. To

antiwar perspective, however, Bush's ramp-up in defense spending looks positively wicked. Not only were Americans duped into supporting the invasion by misinformation about WMD and Hussein-al-Qaeda links, they have also been made to pay through the nose for it. The U.S. doesn't have a conscript army, but its taxpayers are legally press-ganged into providing financial support for Bush's military adventurism.

Domestically, pro-Bush conservatives point to his tax cuts when establishing his free-market credentials. And, to be fair, it is a valid claim. Moreover, the Bush administration was right to avoid the current demand of "fiscally respon-

have been a runner and paid off huge political dividends if implemented.

The final argument advanced by the supporters of Bush's fiscal policy is that the deficit won't harm the economy by pushing up interest rates. That is very misleading, and to see it being used is a sign of how low pro-Bush economists will stoop. The standard argument for why deficits create higher rates is that the government competes for capital, making it scarce and forcing up its price. That, however, implies a fixed supply of credit. Right now, credit is superabundant. Because of lax Federal Reserve policies, getting a loan has never been easier, and debt, private and public, can grow without getting more expensive. Supply meets demand, and the price of debt goes down, not up.

Now, if the Fed were forced to reverse its easy-money stance, interest rates would soar, and the government's voracious hunger for debt would help drive up the cost of borrowing. In other words, the Bushies are benefiting from the devil-may-care monetary policy of Fed chairman Alan Greenspan, who really should be cast as the hidden villain in the deficit saga because of his integral role in underwriting it.

At some point, the markets will have a panic attack over the budget deficit and the gargantuan shortfalls building up in Social Security and Medicare. If the market freaks during Bush's tenure, it might be the only thing that forces him to quit his insane spending habit. Then again, all evidence suggests that a dip in the economy might make him spend even more. Bush doesn't know how to stop. Like a credit-card thief, the President of the United States is going on a shopping binge and making other people pay. If history gives Bush a nickname, it will be Deadbeat Dubya. ■

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IT IS **TRULY SCANDALOUS** THAT THE PRESIDENT DID NOT ACCOMPANY HIS **TAX CUTS** WITH A SERIOUS PLAN TO **CUT THE DEFICIT**.

comprehend the audacity of Rumsfeld's request, recall that defense spending since 2001, after two wars, has increased by around \$150 billion.

Obviously, Rumsfeld may have been putting in large requests as a bargaining tactic, and Suskind does not tell us what happened to his request or what Bush's reaction to it was. This account makes painfully clear, however, that Rumsfeld had dispensed completely with the idea of a "peace dividend." And it would be wholly incorrect to argue that Rumsfeld was somehow prescient to request this sort of money before 9/11. His memo does not focus on terrorism but on hostile states that may gain access to weapons of mass destruction. And since many "rogue states" still exist, we can be pretty certain that there will be calls for more money to tackle them.

Many conservative criticisms of Bush's fiscal policy assume that it was right to fight the war in Iraq. From an

sible" liberals that the budget be balanced before tax cuts are enacted. The truth is that if they had their way, spending would never be reduced to the balancing point. It was an obvious trap, and Bush was astute to avoid it.

At the same time, it is truly scandalous that the president did not accompany his tax cuts with a serious plan to cut the deficit in the medium term. The absence of such a plan shows that the tax cuts were motivated primarily by politics, not a desire to see people take more control over their money. Along with the tax cuts should have come a commitment to balancing the budget in five years using across-the-board spending cuts. It would be a tough sell, especially as much of the deficit is due to a war that few people would have supported had the government not lied. Such a plan, if it were floated now, would probably lose Bush the next election. But introduced a year ago, it could

Feeling a Draft

Imperial burdens overstretch the All-Volunteer Force.

By Doug Bandow

THREE DECADES AGO the United States inaugurated the All-Volunteer Force. The AVF produced the world's finest military, capable of deterring superpower competitors and destroying regional powers with equal avidity.

Today, however, the U.S. military is under enormous strain. Although the best fighting force on the planet, it lacks sufficient strength to satisfy the demands of an imperial foreign policy. The massive troop rotation in Iraq planned for this spring is necessary but will do nothing to reduce pressure on American servicemen.

The U.S. has managed so far by turning the Reserves and National Guard into *de facto* active-duty units. But the Bush administration risks driving down recruiting and retention for both active and Reserve forces. And some congressmen are already promoting a return to conscription. Rep. Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.) warns, "The experts are all saying we're going to have to beef up our presence in Iraq. We've failed to convince our allies to send troops, we've extended deployments so morale is sinking, and the president is saying we can't cut and run. So what's left?"

Unfortunately, no relief for the U.S. military is in the offing. About 10,000 U.S. troops remain in Afghanistan. Despite dramatic initial success, Washington now must cope with increasing attacks on coalition soldiers and foreign aid workers outside the capital.

Iraq is of even greater concern. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld once opined that the number of U.S.

troops could fall to 30,000 by fall 2003. But the garrison now numbers 153,000—about 133,000 of whom are American. (Another 34,000 perform support duties in Kuwait.) The coalition has made progress in restoring services and rebuilding infrastructure. Yet far more is involved in the administration's goal of creating a liberal, pro-Western democracy.

Even the capture of Saddam Hussein seems largely irrelevant to combating an increasingly broad-based insurgency. Indeed, Washington may find its task made more difficult since it can no longer argue that Iraqis must choose between the U.S. and Hussein. Moreover, popular attitudes seem far more equivocal than the administration tells. In mid-November, the CIA warned, in a report endorsed by occupation head Paul Bremer, that Iraqis were losing faith in U.S. efforts and policies, creating a fertile environment for the insurgents. One unnamed official told the *New York Times*, "The trend lines are in the wrong direction."

These conflicts are taking a heavy toll on the U.S. military. By November more Americans had died in Iraq after President George W. Bush's May 1 pronouncement that hostilities had ended than had during the war, for a total of 400. At the same time twice as many had been wounded, about 2,000, as had been during the war. Despite the hopes raised by the capture of Saddam Hussein, insurgents continue to kill, maim, and wound U.S. personnel. Moreover, casualties continue in Afghanistan.

Some analysts and politicians profess that the casualties are overrated as a problem. Columnist Alan Caruba cheerfully explains that statistically the average person is more likely to be murdered in Washington, D.C. Rep. George Nethercutt (R-Wash.) observed that what the U.S. is achieving in Iraq "is a better and more important story than losing a couple of soldiers every day."

On the ground, significant frustration mixes with obvious pride. Administration supporters routinely complain that the media are focusing on bad news; the troops, however, seem quite aware of the bad news. A recent poll of 2,000 soldiers by *Stars and Stripes*, a Pentagon-funded newspaper for members of the armed forces, found that 40 percent believed the Iraq mission was unrelated to their training, one-third believed their mission was not clearly defined, and one-third believed the Iraqi war was of limited value.

The administration has designed a rotation plan to bring down the U.S. garrison to about 110,000 this spring. But that will occur "only if the security situation permits," observes Rumsfeld. President George W. Bush also sought to dampen expectations, saying that force levels could fall, stay the same, or increase, "whatever is necessary to secure Iraq." In fact, many analysts believe that more troops are necessary.

But the Pentagon has had trouble finding sufficient soldiers to man its existing commitments. As of late 2003, 21 of 33 active Army combat brigades were committed overseas—16 in Iraq,

two each in Afghanistan and South Korea, and one in the Balkans. Given other duties and refitting, only three were considered fully free for use in new missions.

In order to maintain training standards and troop morale, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) suggests "rotation ratios" of 3.2:1 to 4:1 for active forces and 7.5:1 to 9:1 for Reserve/Guard. Yet of roughly 480,000 Army active duty and 560,000 Army Reserve and Army National Guard forces, 370,000 are deployed overseas. Even this understates the problem. Only about 300,000 active Army personnel and 470,000 Army Reserve/Guard members are in deployable units.

The burden is heaviest on reservists. Some 170,000 reservists, 137,000 of them Army, remain on active duty. In contrast, the average annual call-up during the 1990s was about 10,000 annually. Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, admits, "The weekend warrior is dead."

The military can handle such burdens in a temporary emergency. But speaking only of Afghanistan in March 2002, Secretary Rumsfeld observed, "It's helpful to remember that those who developed the concept for peacekeepers in Bosnia assured everyone that those forces would complete their mission by the end of that year and be home by Christmas. We are now heading into our seventh year of U.S. and international involvement in Bosnia." Thomas Donnelly and Vance Serchuk of the American Enterprise Institute suggest, "The protection of the embryonic Iraqi democracy is a duty that will likely extend for decades." Even President Bush admits that the U.S. faces a "massive and long-term undertaking" in Iraq.

Which brings back Representative Rangel's question: "So what's left?" The most obvious source of manpower is the Iraqis themselves. Unfortunately, this

approach offers no panacea for the United States. Set aside the practical problems in recruiting Iraqis—half of the newly trained Iraqi army deserted in early December, complaining of inadequate pay. The larger and faster the force assembled, the poorer will be its training, the more it will include regime opponents, and the more weapons will be put into Iraqi hands. There is already evidence that Iraqi police trained by Americans have co-ordinated attacks on occupation forces.

Private contractors can help. The U.S. has hired a number of companies to provide security and training in Iraq. But it is impractical to assemble private forces to engage in anti-insurgent operations. And there is a serious problem of accountability and rules of engagement for contractors.

Best would be increased allied support, but little more than dribs and drabs are forthcoming—for instance, 1,000 Japanese soldiers to do humanitarian work (Tokyo has announced that its forces will do nothing to aid allied forces, even if they come under attack) and some Korean soldiers, if the parlia-

admits that many infantrymen will have to serve back-to-back foreign tours. Even though deployment in countries like Britain and Germany is more pleasant than in Afghanistan and Iraq, few people will join and remain in the Army if they rarely see home.

Adding Marine Corps actives, as the Department of Defense (DoD) plans to do this spring, will help. But the Marines are a relatively small force, 175,000, that is intended to respond to unexpected contingencies. Warns the CBO, "If all Marine regiments were either deployed, recovering after deployments, or preparing for deployments ... DoD's ability to quickly deploy substantial combat power in the early phases of an operation would be degraded."

What about the Reserves and National Guard? These troops are intended to supplement the active force in an emergency. Unfortunately, write Philip Gold and Erin Solaro of the Aretea institute, Washington is using reservists "not just as reinforcements for the regulars but as substitutes." The Army Reserve has been mobilized more in the last 12 years, 10 times, than in the previous 75 years, nine

THE ARMY RESERVE HAS BEEN MOBILIZED MORE IN THE LAST 12 YEARS, 10 TIMES, THAN IN THE PREVIOUS 75 YEARS, NINE TIMES.

ment approves. The Europeans are reluctant to contribute conscripts to such dangerous duties and understandably hesitate to join an enterprise they originally opposed. As Francois Heisbourg, Director of the Paris-based Foundation for Strategic Research bluntly put it, "I don't think anybody is going to jump into an American-run quagmire."

Thus Iraq will remain largely an American show. Yet the active forces don't have much left. The Pentagon

times. Today Guard and Reserve units handle everything from civil affairs to personnel services.

Extended deployments place a greater burden on reservists than on active-duty forces because the former, who consciously chose not to join the active force, must leave not only family, friends, and community, but also jobs. The burden has been compounded by discrimination against reservists, who often serve longer deployments than

active-duty soldiers but are last on the list to receive the best equipment, such as Kevlar vests. Nevertheless, the military has been pressuring reservists to waive the statutory requirement of 12 months home between overseas deployments.

Where else can bodies be found? When Gen. Eric Shinseki retired as Army Chief of Staff in June, he warned, "Beware the 12-division strategy for a 10-division Army." Support for adding at least two divisions has been building in Congress.

So far the Defense Department has rebuffed such proposals. Adding forces takes money and time. The CBO concludes, "Recruiting, training, and equipping two additional divisions would entail up-front costs of as much as \$18 billion to \$19 billion and would take about five years to accomplish, CBO estimates. In the long run, the cost to operate and sustain these new divisions as a permanent part of the Army's force structure would be about \$6 billion annually (plus between \$3 billion and \$4 billion per year to employ them in Iraq)."

Moreover, the armed services are having trouble not just because excessive and unpleasant commitments make it harder for them to attract and keep enough people. Increasing recruiting and retention requirements actually make the job even tougher.

Publicly, many officials and analysts argue that there is no morale problem. Yet the *Stars and Stripes* survey found that one-third of soldiers said their own morale was low, and half said their units' morale was low. Half said they would not re-up once their tours ended and the DoD's stop-loss order, which bars retirements, was lifted. Moreover, *Stars and Stripes* reported that it was hearing "edgier complaints about inequality among the forces and lack of confidence in their leaders" than the sort of griping common among enlisted personnel.

Morale seems to be improving today but only because those now in Iraq are about to be sent home.

Also critical is the attitude of service families. Worries Fox News Channel commentator Robert Maginnis, "Either we find a fix to rotate those troops out and to keep the families content ... or we're going to suffer what I anticipate is a downturn in retention." Army recruiters are finding increasing resistance from parents, especially when they seek to recruit 17-year-olds.

In fiscal year 2003, which ended Sept. 30, DoD made most of its manpower targets. The Army National Guard and Navy Reserve, however, fell behind their goals; the former ran 87.4 percent and the latter a less worrisome 98.9 percent. Attrition rates remained low, though Defense Undersecretary David Chu admitted, "Certain high-demand (high-use) units and specialties have experienced higher than normal attrition."

But the situation could easily worsen. Secretary Rumsfeld acknowledges, "The effects of a stress on the force are unlikely to be felt immediately; they're much more likely to be felt down the road." Similarly, Les Brownlee, acting Secretary of the Army, worries that DoD might have to wait "some three to six months after these units return" to judge the impact. The effect might take even longer for retentions, since stop-loss remains in effect for some Army active-duty soldiers and many Army Reserve soldiers.

A growing economy, by providing more employment alternatives, could discourage new enlistments. And the longer the Afghanistan and Iraq occupations, the more likely problems are to arise. Beth Asch of the Rand Corporation explains, "Short deployments actually boost enlistments and reenlistments." But "Studies show longer deployments can definitely have a negative impact." Lt. General Blum says that

a fall in recruits and re-enlistees is "the No. 1 thing in my worry book."

So all that's left, in Representative Rangel's view, is renewing the draft. Every recent war has sparked proposals for restarting conscription. Most recently, Representative Rangel and Sen. Fritz Hollings (D-S.C.) introduced legislation to establish a system of conscription-based national service. Moreover, the Selective Service System recently placed a notice on its Web site recruiting for local and appeal boards, sparking a flurry of media stories and administration denials.

From a security standpoint, conscription would be foolish. The U.S. military is the finest on the earth largely because voluntarism allows the Pentagon to be selective, choosing recruits who are smarter and better educated than their civilian counterparts. Enlistees are also selective; they work to succeed in their chosen career rather than to escape forced service. They serve longer terms and re-enlist in higher numbers, increasing the experience and skills of the force.

Since conscription would lower the quality of the U.S. military, draft advocates make other arguments. Rangel maintains that lower socioeconomic groups "make up the overwhelming majority of our nation's armed forces, and that, by and large, those of wealth and position are absent from the ranks of ground troops." Actually, Rangel is wrong. There are fewer children of elites, but the underclass is entirely absent, barred from volunteering. Virtually no one who lacks a high-school diploma or who doesn't score in the top three of five categories of the Armed Forces Quality Test can join. The U.S. military is overwhelmingly middle class; in fact, the test scores and educational achievements of recruits exceed those of young people generally. Blacks are somewhat overrepresented, but they

disproportionately serve in support, not combat arms. Hispanics are underrepresented.

Broader national service makes even less sense. It would divert people from military service to civilian tasks, jail young men and women who prefer not to put their lives at the discretion of political officials, and waste people's lives in frivolous, pork-barrel pursuits. How can one compare picking up cigarette butts in a park with patrolling the streets of Afghanistan?

Although a volunteer military beats a draft force, the Bush administration's foreign policy risks driving down recruiting and retention, which over the long-term could wreck the AVF. If forced to choose between a policy of promiscuous military intervention and freedom, the administration might turn to a draft. Argues *Washington Times* editorial page editor Tony Blankley, it is critical to increase the size of the military, "whether by draft or by voluntary means."

Ironically, Blankley recognizes that voluntarism impedes an interventionist foreign policy—which disproves Representative Rangel's final contention, that "there would be more caution" in going to war if policymakers' children were at risk. The surest barrier to war is not a draft, which allowed the Vietnam War to proceed for years, but the AVF, which empowers average people to say no. A related argument by *Washington Post* columnist David Broder is that a draft would ensure that more leaders served in the military. But conscription would not increase the incidence of military service, which was low throughout American history until World War II and the Cold War. With new accessions in 2003 running only 185,000, the armed services require fewer than 10 percent of male 18-year-olds, and 5 percent of all 18-year-olds, irrespective of how the military is manned.

American and British forces are interdicting an important source of income for al-Qaeda:

heroin produced in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Several men arrested over the past three weeks transporting heroin in the Arabian Sea are believed to be al-Qaeda and are being interrogated. The value of the seized cargoes is a modest \$10 million, but the three vessels captured by coalition naval forces were only a small part of a much larger smuggling operation. Thousands of small, motorized dhows ply the Gulf waters, and most are never boarded or inspected by naval patrols. The poppies are grown in Afghanistan, and the heroin is processed along the Pakistani border in traditional tribal lands lacking permanent central-government presence. British Special Forces are now training an elite Afghan force to destroy heroin laboratories and to interdict narcotics traffic inside Afghanistan, but local farmers will undoubtedly resist violently. Pakistan, alarmed by two nearly successful assassination attempts against President Musharraf, is indicating that it will also co-operate.



Local fishermen have discovered and compromised a counter-terrorist operation along the Somali coast.

Electronic devices on the tiny island of Bur Gaabo near the Somali/Kenyan border have been monitoring suspected al-Qaeda movements. The devices, linked to a satellite, included infrared and other surveillance cameras powered by solar panels as well as sensitive microphones. Bur Gaabo, an uninhabited rocky outcrop, is close to the larger island of Ras Kambona, where U.S. forces had discovered an al-Qaeda arms depot and training camp. Somali fishermen usually do not frequent the area and may have landed in an emergency. The equipment is being retrieved, and al-Qaeda and members of the Islamic Somali Federation are now avoiding the area. Several hundred U.S. Special Forces are based at a nearby French military facility in Djibouti.



Karl Rove has decided that aggressive U.S. foreign policy initiatives must be minimized

in the run-up to the November elections. The Rove political strategy is in response to polling that indicates the American electorate is uneasy over long-term entanglement in Iraq and the prospect of new foreign adventures. There is also a continuing concern over terrorist threats and a "fatigue factor" due to repeated "cry wolf" national alerts. The White House is now willing to lessen confrontation and maintain a quiet dialogue with Iran, while emphasizing support for Iranian so-called moderates. This recognizes that Iran's ayatollahs cannot easily be dislodged and concedes that Tehran has played a relatively constrained role in Iraq. The administration is also suspending hostile action against Syria, whose alleged support of opposition to the American presence in Iraq has irritated administration hardliners. Neoconservatives at the Defense Department and in the vice president's office had proposed an invasion of Syria this spring to topple President Bashar Assad, and the White House appeared to be acquiescent. The neocons, always acutely sensitive to Israeli security concerns, argue that Syria supports terrorist groups Hezbollah, Hamas, and Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

Philip Giraldi, a former CIA Officer, is a partner in Cannistraro Associates, an international security consultancy.

What to do? The obvious place to start is improved pay and benefits, especially for Guard and Reserve members, who are increasingly being treated like active-duty soldiers. For instance, Democratic legislators have proposed extending health insurance for National Guard and Reserve members even when they are not deployed.

Improved treatment for those deployed in overseas, and particularly in battle zones, also matters. In September,

Another creative approach, which runs against military tradition, is to bring in trained personnel laterally. The demand for civil-affairs personnel, technology experts, and translators, for instance, vary by conflict.

DoD also should consider establishing a multi-tiered reserve force, with some units available for longer-term deployments, others for temporary emergencies, and a number for homeland duties. The CBO suggests creating

nam to save the Army. Plans to turn authority over to Iraqis are welcome and reflect administration realization that, as one unnamed official put it, "The Iraqis won't tolerate us staying in power for that long." The administration, however, plans an indefinite military occupation.

The administration must recognize—even if it does not publicly acknowledge—its mistake in invading and occupying Iraq. This is not the first time that the U.S. has intervened militarily in potentially disastrous civil wars and irregular conflicts. But, as Korb points out, in the cases of Lebanon and Somalia, "[T]he Presidents admitted their mistakes and withdrew the military before more problems were created for the military and the country." Better to accept the prospect of Iraqi instability with equanimity and focus on preventing accumulation of weapons of mass destruction and co-operation with terrorists.

The U.S. military won the Cold War, defeated a host of small states with minimal casualties, and could overwhelm any nation. But it cannot do everything. Michael O'Hanlon of the Brookings Institution worries, "It would be the supreme irony, and a national tragedy, if after winning two wars in two years, the U.S. Army were broken and defeated while trying to keep the peace."

Conscription is no answer. Fiddling with military compensation and force structure would help but would not address the basic problem. Only abandoning a foreign policy of empire will eliminate pressure to create an imperial military. ■

Doug Bandow is a Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute. As a Special Assistant to President Reagan, he worked with the Military Manpower Task Force. He is the author and editor of several books, including Human Resources and Defense Manpower.

ONLY ABANDONING A FOREIGN POLICY OF EMPIRE WILL ELIMINATE PRESSURE TO CREATE AN IMPERIAL MILITARY.

the Pentagon began the first rest and recuperation leave program since Vietnam, allowing soldiers 15 days at home. The House has approved legislation to pay for the flights from Baltimore (where military flights land) to servicemen's hometowns.

Resources also need to be put into recruiting. In fact, so far the Pentagon has helped stanch potential personnel losses by increasing signing bonuses, doubling the advertising budget, and developing cyber-recruiting.

The Armed Services could use uniformed personnel more efficiently. Explained Secretary Rumsfeld, "We can get some, possibly 300,000 people, military people, who are doing non-military jobs out of those non-military jobs and into military positions." The strategy is sound, though civilian functions in war zones cannot always be easily categorized, and civilians do not come cheap.

DoD needs to rethink the mix of duties within services as well as shift some billets between active and reserve forces. As acting Army Chief of Staff Gen. John Keane has observed, "We need more infantry. We need more military police. We need more civil affairs."

temporary "constabulary" units made up of members of the Individual Ready Reserve and people who recently left active or Reserve or Guard service, which could train for six months, deploy for one year, and then disband. Moreover, the military could offer higher compensation for reservists willing to accept more frequent deployment. In fact, the Navy uses assignment and sea pay, and the Army offers stationing pay to encourage personnel to accept undesirable jobs and locations. Larger reenlistment bonuses also are employed for some hard-to-fill specialties.

Most important, the U.S. should drop unnecessary commitments. The Pentagon is now reviewing America's strategic posture. Even Secretary Rumsfeld is talking about turning Bosnia and Kosovo over to NATO and reducing the force presence in South Korea and the Sinai. Far more could be done in both Asia and Europe.

But the first priority should be to exit Iraq expeditiously. Lawrence Korb of the Center for American Progress points to Gen. Maxwell Taylor, who observed that we went to Vietnam to save the country but had to withdraw from Viet-

An American In Paris

How George Plimpton waged the literary Cold War

By Richard Cummings

TWENTY-SIX YEARS AGO, the *New York Times* ran an article on the cultural cold wars and, without citing sources, stated that author Pete Matthiessen had served in the CIA in the 1950s and that his literary activities had served as a cover for his intelligence work. By then, Matthiessen had become a legend, combining an austere life as a bayman on the South Fork of Long Island with a prodigious literary output, including fiction and nature writing.

Matthiessen was also known as a founder of the illustrious *Paris Review*, which he launched in Paris in 1951, allegedly to publish *avant garde* fiction, poetry, and interviews with famous and up-and-coming literary figures, including Ernest Hemingway and Samuel Beckett.

The official history of the *Paris Review* describes how Matthiessen brought in his boyhood friend, George Plimpton, who had been studying at King's College, Cambridge, as its editor, a position he took without salary. While running with the bulls in Pamplona, the history goes, Plimpton made Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, a son of the Aga Khan and a graduate of Harvard, an offer he could not refuse to become the publisher of the *Paris Review*. Henceforth, Plimpton invariably described Prince Sadruddin as the *Paris Review's* benefactor.

The 1950s were a period of intense intellectual and political ferment in Paris, with anti-Americanism on the rise, as left-wing French intellectuals and

writers, such as Louis Aragon and Jean-Paul Sartre decried American support for Franco in Spain. Of the French intellectuals, only Raymond Aron resisted Marxism and the notion that the Soviet Union had more legitimacy and moral authority than the United States because it supported the liberation movements in Algeria and Vietnam.

In this environment, the American *jeunesse dorée* of Peter Matthiessen; his stunning wife, the writer Patsy Southgate; George Plimpton; and *Paris Review* managing editor, John Train, Sadruddin Aga Khan's roommate at Harvard, flourished. Plimpton became a well-known figure in Paris, a Gary Cooper look-a-like who spoke perfect French but exuded a classic American naïveté.

The *Paris Review* continued to publish, ultimately pulling up stakes in Paris and relocating to George Plimpton's apartment on the fashionable East Side of Manhattan, as Plimpton's personal fame as an author and personality grew. He seemed to be everywhere, at Andy Warhol's Factory, at sophisticated parties, boxing with Archie Moore, and experiencing life as a pro football player, publishing his exploits in best-sellers that dramatically increased his fame. He created Sid Finch, the ingenious fictitious pitcher, and gave lectures on world politics.

Matthiessen, likewise, became a legend as the author of *At Play In The Field Of The Lord*, *Far Tortuga*, and *The Snow Leopard*, as well as a series of

nature classics and pieces for the *New Yorker* from far-off locations. He became a Zen Buddhist master and monk.

But Matthiessen, who moved increasingly to the left politically, supporting Cesar Chavez and the American Indian Movement, began to express his anguish to friends about his work for the CIA. At first, he was not specific, saying only that he regretted having done it. As a militant liberal, Matthiessen began to see his own experiences in the CIA as somehow a betrayal of his liberal principles, just as the Rev. William Sloan Coffin did. He no longer regarded the efforts to stop the communists in Paris as something laudable, a point of view that became endemic to American liberalism, which characterized the CIA and its covert operations as nefarious, exposing the liberals to charges that they were naïve about national security.

What actually happened in Paris is a story of the times. Patsy Southgate, who was at Smith College when she became engaged to Matthiessen, described how Matthiessen had been recruited by the CIA at Yale to serve as an intelligence officer. Upon their marriage they were whisked off to CIA orientation and then dispatched to Paris, where, she said, Matthiessen's assignment was to "found a literary magazine" as his cover, a task that proved more difficult in its execution than in its conception. Instead, he joined up with expatriate Harold Humes, who was starting a fledgling literary publication that would also feature articles on Paris nightlife and restaurants.

Matthiessen soon took control of the publication and replaced Humes as editor. "They dumped the job on me," Matthiessen related to author Frances Stonor Saunders, referring to the CIA. As Matthiessen would later recount to his close friend, the novelist and playwright John Sherry, Sadruddin Aga Khan "never put up a penny." All the money, Matthiessen related, "came from the CIA," which used Sadruddin Aga Khan's foundation as a conduit.

A former ambassador who served on the National Security Council adds that George Plimpton, during this period, was an "agent of influence" for the CIA, a term used to describe editors, authors, and journalists who had agreed to influence the media and the culture on behalf of the CIA. They were invariably paid for their services. Plimpton

Paid The Piper, which caused a sensation when it appeared in 1999.

From abstract art to *Encounter* magazine, the CIA waged the cultural cold wars with considerable effectiveness. But revelations of the CIA's role in the operations of the Congress of Cultural Freedom led to the Congress's ultimate disbanding, with French radicalism reaching its peak in *les evenements* in 1968, when opposition to America's role in the Vietnam War reached a fever pitch as students also rebelled against Charles de Gaulle and the French establishment.

But Matthiessen and Plimpton, throughout, while remaining good friends, were very different sorts of people. Matthiessen was the nephew of F.O. Matthiessen, the literary critic who committed suicide. While on the Harvard faculty, F.O. Matthiessen was polit-

ent. While he actively supported George McGovern for president and considered himself a liberal, he remained a member of the Racquet Club. A graduate of Exeter and Harvard, he was the son of Francis Plimpton, a senior partner in the white-shoe law firm of Debevoise & Plimpton, his fellow senior partner being Eli Whitney Debevoise. Francis Plimpton, who served as counsel to the Democratic Party, also worked for the CIA, according to the former ambassador who alleges that George Plimpton was an "agent of influence" for the Agency.

The *Paris Review* remained central to Plimpton's life, and he insisted to the end that Sadruddin Aga Khan was the benefactor of the publication. Plimpton was able to secure a half-million-dollar bequest from an "anonymous donor" for the purchase of the magazine's archives so they could be donated to the Morgan Library in New York.

He enlisted Drue Heinz to become the new publisher following the death of Prince Sadruddin. The Drue Heinz Trust, which also supports an important literary award, now, as the result of Plimpton's efforts, supports the *Paris Review's* budget, including its New York editors and several editors in London and Paris.

That the recently revived international focus of the *Paris Review* came at a time when a wave of anti-Americanism was sweeping Britain, with Harold Pinter and John le Carre vehemently denouncing George W. Bush's pre-emptive war in Iraq, and with the French government breaking ranks with America entirely, brings to mind the '50s. It was as if George Plimpton's life had come full circle. ■

Richard Cummings writes and lectures on international affairs and is the author of The Pied Piper: Allard K. Lowenstein and the Liberal Dream.

FROM ABSTRACT ART TO *ENCOUNTER* MAGAZINE, THE CIA WAGED THE CULTURAL COLD WARS WITH CONSIDERABLE EFFECTIVENESS.

was "very close to the Congress of Cultural Freedom," the former ambassador reports, "and very involved with their activities."

What the *Paris Review* did, under Plimpton's direction, was to feature non-communist writers, who were regarded as "apolitical" or somehow still regarded as of "the Left." Since promotion of the Non-Communist Left, or NCL, as it was known in CIA parlance, was a major policy of the CIA, it was no accident that it was able to attract Matthiessen and Plimpton, both liberals, to enter its service, albeit in different capacities.

The history of the Congress of Cultural Freedom, founded under the auspices of the CIA to counter communist cultural power in Europe, has been documented by Saunders in her book, *Who*

ically far to the left. Peter Matthiessen himself incurred the displeasure of the Agency as his own activities on behalf of the radical Indian movement led to his being sued for slander by Gov. Bill Janklow of South Dakota because of allegations in Matthiessen's book, *In The Spirit of Crazy Horse*. Matthiessen eventually won the case on appeal. (Janklow was recently convicted of manslaughter as the result of a speeding accident and resigned his seat in Congress.) James Linville, the former managing editor of the *Paris Review*, who confirms that "the *Paris Review* was Peter Matthiessen's cover for the CIA," says that Matthiessen is "haunted by the CIA." His name remains on the masthead as an editor.

Plimpton's life experience was differ-

Arts & Letters

FILM

[21 Grams]

The Heart's Reasons

By Steve Sailer

THE MEXICAN FILM INDUSTRY has begun to revive after decades of somnolence under one-party rule. Nationalized in the late 1950s, the once-lively Mexican cinema subsided into the torpor common to government-owned monopolies.

On a broader scale, Mexico's kleptocratic overlords emasculated almost the entire cultural elite. Instead of martyring artists and intellectuals in a gulag, the nominally leftist PRI quietly bought off potential dissidents with lucrative jobs and opportunities to spout radical rhetoric at luxurious international conferences. Fortunately, the PRI crack-up that began with the grotesque scandals and assassinations of 1993-94 has allowed some uncorrupted talent to flourish.

Yet, now that important filmmakers have emerged in Mexico, the business faces a giant sucking sound as gifted directors like Alejandro González Iñárritu head north.

On a \$2 million budget in 2000, Iñárritu created the acclaimed "Amores Perros" (a.k.a. "Love's a Bitch"), which used dogfights as a metaphor for the harshness of life in Mexico City. Along with his co-writer, the Mexican novelist Guillermo Arriaga, Iñárritu envisioned his second feature, "21 Grams," as another Spanish-language exploration of that dog-eat-dog metropolis.

A \$20 million budget and the participation of prestigious Hollywood stars Sean Penn, Naomi Watts, and Benicio Del Toro persuaded Iñárritu instead to shoot in English in Memphis. Unsurprisingly, he catches so little of the local flavor of the home of the Delta blues and Elvis that I guessed the location was Minneapolis.

"21 Grams" is a characteristically Mexican tale of death and revenge. The corruption and incompetence of the numerous overlapping Mexican police forces make do-it-yourself justice more attractive south of the border. Americans also enjoy vigilante tragedies, such as "Mystic River" and "In the Bedroom," but more because they represent unusual man-bites-dog stories. In real life, aggrieved suburban Americans sue rather than shoot.

Iñárritu's film is an above-average melodrama tricked up with fashionable non-linear plotting to distract the art-house crowd from its lurid, slightly dopey scenario. Told without the Ronco Vegematic editing, "21 Grams" would resemble one of the flashy but humorless *telenovelas* that Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas Llosa parodied in his *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter*.

Penn plays a mathematician with a failing heart whose wife is infertile because she had a botched abortion when he abandoned her. But they've uneasily reconciled, and now she wants an operation so she can have his baby after he dies.

Suddenly, Penn's life is saved by a heart transplanted from housewife Watts's architect husband, whom Del Toro, an ex-con who had quit drinking when he found Jesus, killed in a hit-and-run accident. Over his wife's objection that his children need him working, Del Toro turns himself in. But Watts won't press charges, so he is freed.

Penn stalks his new heart's former owner's widow until their hearts beat as one. (As Blaise Pascal and Woody Allen have observed, "The heart has its reasons," but Iñárritu and Arriaga take that idea a little too literally.) Watts changes her mind and asks Penn to kill Del Toro. Then more stuff happens.

I am not spoiling the soap opera because Iñárritu repeatedly flashes forward to show you what's coming, as well as backward, sideways, and kitty-corner, daring you to decipher it. Because Iñárritu is such a strong storyteller, "21 Grams" is less befuddling than it sounds, and even morbid fun if you like puzzles. Nonetheless, it's an annoyingly elitist ploy to make the film hip by rendering it incomprehensible to the left half of the bell curve.

Iñárritu rightly says of Sean Penn's famous acting style, "He doesn't rationalize; he's just intuition and pure emotion." So, why cast him as a mathematician, that most abstracted of professions?

The Anglo-Australian Naomi Watts is the most generic-looking beautiful blonde in Hollywood—she could be Britney Spears's older sister. That might be why her career languished until 2001's "Mulholland Drive," since she can certainly act up a storm.

With his sad, fleshy face, long salt-and-pepper hair, and ambiguous ethnicity, the ursine Del Toro (an Oscar winner for "Traffic") is definitely distinctive in appearance. He gets the meaty role that Penn enjoyed in "Mystic River": the ex-hoodlum trying to be a family man. Everyone talks about the glamour of evil, but there's also a glamour of goodness in movies, and it's quite moving to see Del Toro play a man trying to do what's right even though his every instinct is wrong. ■

Steve Sailer is TAC's film critic and a reporter for UPI.

BOOKS

[*America the Virtuous: The Crisis of Democracy and the Quest for Empire*, Claes G. Ryn, Transaction Publishers, 221 pages]

Wrong Revolution

By Paul Gottfried

A WORK BY a prolific Swedish philosopher now living in the U.S., *America the Virtuous* is a hard-hitting assault on the “neo-Jacobins,” who devote their energy to plotting war against “states that pose little or no military threat to the United States or the rest of the Western world.” Ryn zeroes in on the ideological motives that actuate such militarists. In the process he examines the thriving illusion that democratic virtue can be spread universally by forcing American fashions on other peoples. Because of this belief among journalists and politicians, traced at least as far back as the presidency of Woodrow Wilson, the American constitutional republic, and its moral capital, has suffered damage. While Ryn does not claim that a “quest for empire” is the only thing wrong with our culture, it typifies the inability to practice self-government, which requires self-reliant citizens fortified by moderation. In the early 20th century, Harvard humanist scholar Irving Babbitt (1865-1933) stressed the destructive effects of self-indulgent politics, whether humanitarianism, an insatiable lust for power, or a combination of both, represented by democratic imperialists. Rather than seeing a contradiction between sentimentality and the drive toward world control, Ryn, like Babbitt whom he quotes repeatedly, treats the two as compatible.

America the Virtuous has received proper attention in a syndicated column

by Paul Craig Roberts. This former undersecretary of the treasury describes Ryn as a “learned, insightful, and courageous scholar who ably explains the ideas that are destroying our country.” Ryn has gone after “ideas that are the property of neo-Jacobins” who call themselves neoconservatives, “a clever euphemism behind which hide groups of radicals who stand outside of, and opposed to, the American tradition. The U.S. has been subverted from within, as these counterfeit conservatives hold the reins of power in the Bush administration.”

Ryn shows the neoconservatives to be anything but lovers of the past, except in the special sense of hoping to continue their creative destruction, and in a previous book *The New Jacobins* and in a lead article published in *Orbis* (Summer 2003) he makes no secret of his revulsion for “counterfeit conservatives.” His critical distinction between modest, constitutionally articulated self-government and the centralized, imperialist democracy unleashed by the French Revolution is carried over to old-fashioned American conservatives and their neoconservative adversaries. And the author comes up with chilling quotations from neoconservative “policy-makers” Charles Krauthammer, Ben

Wattenberg, and Michael Ledeen, which illustrate their bombast and phony machismo. His sarcastic dissection of a “virtuous” democratic America that is losing its capacity for self-government is certainly worth reading—at least several times. Even in those areas in which genuine progress has been registered—medicine and technology—the result, according to Ryn, has been state managerial control. Without the state being put in charge of everyone’s life, we are made to believe, people will not obtain health care or will go on eating junk food and smoking noxious weeds. With-

out the state controlling income and production, citizens, we also hear, will not be able to enjoy technological advances. Ryn bids us worry about the restoration of real virtue and our political well being instead of inflicting our nation building on others. An unsettling revelation in this study, which is also found in Andrew Bacevich’s critique of American globalism, is how far back our present obsessions run. As Ryn demonstrates by bringing up Woodrow Wilson and other Progressives, something closely resembling neoconservatism was already detectable in the early 20th century. And even more controversially, Ryn quotes the utopian rhetoric about America in Thomas Jefferson, a practice by which he has offended some Southern conservatives. But Ryn’s intention is not to throw together the Virginia patrician with those who have praised American wars as experiments in democratic education. Rather, he wishes to prove that radical revolutionary ideas can be found in an otherwise respectable American founder, who had once indiscreetly talked up the French Revolution. Ryn is demonstrating the long-established receptiveness in our society to what now passes for “American values.”

RYN SHOWS THE **NEOCONSERVATIVES** TO BE ANYTHING BUT LOVERS OF THE PAST, EXCEPT IN HOPING TO CONTINUE THEIR **CREATIVE DESTRUCTION**.

America the Virtuous never answers directly why the politics it censures have come to characterize self-described American conservatives. Why does the media Right even more than the media Left embrace radically anti-conservative thinking, particularly on foreign affairs? Ryn deals with this worrisome question in his closing chapter by indirection, by stressing the overlap between “abstract universalism” and “a nationalism that is prone to self-absorption and therefore disdain for others and bellicosity.” “Unbounded nationalism” and “a monopolistic ideological universalism

Wattenberg, and Michael Ledeen, which illustrate their bombast and phony machismo. His sarcastic dissection of a “virtuous” democratic America that is losing its capacity for self-government is certainly worth reading—at least several times. Even in those areas in which genuine progress has been registered—medicine and technology—the result, according to Ryn, has been state managerial control. Without the state being put in charge of everyone’s life, we are made to believe, people will not obtain health care or will go on eating junk food and smoking noxious weeds. With-

that scorns historically formed societies" are in fact two sides of the same coin. Both deny the right of other peoples to be left alone and insist that unless "America the virtuous" is forcing its will upon other countries, in an endless quest for empire, there can be neither peace nor justice.

In the '70s and '80s, the American Left swarmed with the despisers of the U.S., engaged in a global struggle against the Soviets and their proxies. The Right by default became the America-booster, in whose ranks coexisted both traditional anti-Communists and neo-Jacobins. But it was the neo-Jacobins who by the end of the Cold War were able to define the moral substance of the struggle against the Soviets, as a global democratic crusade tied to a particular state representing a political creed. Unlike other nation states, neo-Jacobin America is ethnically and racially pluralistic but imagined to rest on a universally applicable proposition, that everyone should be viewed as equal and be empowered to enjoy human rights. Ryn recognizes the danger of what Burke characterized as an "armed doctrine," an invitation to wipe out historical heritages that displease those legislating for "humanity." Thus the American Right has come to instantiate two interrelated evils that belong properly on the Left, anti-historical universalism and revolutionary nationalism.

To his credit, Ryn does not flee from the modern world into a "traditionalism of a romantically nostalgic, unimaginative or rigid kind" and speaks of the need to adapt "those elements of traditional Western civilization that are enduringly valid" to the present age. Nor does he reject the need for universal ethics, as opposed to the dogmas of the *terribles simplificateurs*, those who cannot tolerate having questions raised about the values they seek to stuff down others' throats.

Lest one doubt Ryn's complaints, recall President Bush's speech to the National Endowment for Democracy, the neocon Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, that calls for greater financial and human investments in the Middle East until all its oppressed

women have been granted full political participation. Peter Brookes of the Heritage Foundation has been endorsing this speech in a widely distributed op-ed piece "Forward Freedom." According to Brookes, we are beset by a "misguided mindset" that believes that democracy is not a "universal value." In fact, Brookes insists, "It is the right of all people—Muslim or not" to live in a "secular, tolerant, and democratic" society. For better or worse, however, such a society was not mandated by our founding fathers, who allowed the several states to maintain their established churches and, with only few exceptions, never advocated political equality for women. Moreover, the French Jacobins, who were candid sexists, would have recoiled from Brookes's gender egalitarianism. In contrast to the active social role played by aristocratic and bourgeois women before the French Revolution, the Jacobins limited female participation in public life to comforting soldiers and bearing sons, who would eventually become *soldats révolutionnaires*. What the new Jacobins described by Ryn are pushing is the universal acceptance of what we now consider as "democratic," an extended yuppie society featuring liberated women, consumer choices, and something approaching open borders.

It is not "a misguided mindset" but the recognition that some social preferences are relative to time and place, and may not be particularly good to start with, that causes Ryn to resist this neo-Jacobin utopianism. Brookes also extols "two of the world's most successful free societies," postwar Japan and Germany, which American social engineers were allowed to resocialize. Aside from the fact that Brookes's fellow-neocon Ralph Peters has just finished complaining that the Germans are almost uniformly pro-Nazi, and aside from the problem that German jails are full of politically insensitive authors, Brookes overlooks the historically obvious: unlike Middle Eastern countries, Germany and Japan had considerable middle classes by the early 20th century. Both countries, but espe-

cially Germany, could point to functioning parliamentary institutions before their stumbling into mischief in the 1930s. (Southern and Southwestern Germany had more liberal constitutions in the early 19th century than did any other part of Europe then.) Even more relevant, the U.S. only got to reconstruct these countries after bombing their civilian and military populations back to the Stone Age. Does our Heritage Foundation "foreign policy" maven call for a similar strategy to set things right in Iraq and Saudi Arabia? Ryn laments the presence of a poor "historical sense" among the neo-Jacobins. Indeed in a sequel to this work, *A Common Human Ground*, he criticizes their unwillingness to learn from historical experience, which they claim "provides no moral direction." This observation may be overly generous. Ryn's subjects should not be allowed to talk about "History" until they can learn about what happened in the past.

Incidentally, the real Jacobins produced polished rhetoric, in contrast to those indigestible phrases churned out by their modern counterparts. Ryn does not further our aesthetic pleasure by routinely beginning each chapter with clunky quotations from his subjects. If only we did not have to read them in the original! ■

Paul Gottfried is a professor of humanities at Elizabethtown College and the author of Multiculturalism and the Politics of Guilt.

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[*The First Grace: Rediscovering the Natural Law in a Post-Christian World*, Russell Hittinger, ISI Books, 334 pages]

From Highest Heaven Handed Down

By Cicero Bruce

FEW ARE BETTER qualified than Russell Hittinger to expound the divine communication of moral necessities to human intellect. Hittinger holds the William K. Warren Chair of Catholic Studies at the University of Tulsa, where he also chairs the Department of Philosophy and Religion, while maintaining an appointment as Research Professor of Law. What recommends him more than anything else, though, is his membership in the Pontifical Academy of Saint Thomas Aquinas. Hittinger is well acquainted with the Angelic Doctor of Aquino, upon whose writings the Christian understanding of natural law has been solidly based for over seven centuries.

In *The First Grace* Hittinger traces Thomas's natural-law suppositions back to the Council of Arles (AD 473), where the natural law was defined as the "first grace of God" (*per primam Dei gratiam*) before the coming of Christ (*in adventum Christi*). Thomas subscribed to this definition and, in accordance with the 30 bishops at Arles, affirmed Saint Augustine's belief that the eternal law is impressed in the soul. Thomas strongly emphasized, however, that natural law is an exclusive function of the divine intellect. To locate natural law in either nature or the human mind is a fundamental mistake, Hittinger explains, because, although the "order of nature and the order of the mind are law abiding," they are not laws in themselves.

Since the birth of Cartesian man, Thomistic formulations of natural law have lost their wide application. Nonetheless, they remain essential to

Christian orthodoxy. Even after the Reformation, when non-Catholic theologians began scrutinizing the efficacy of natural law in human affairs, the definition of natural law as "higher law" continued to inform Protestant thinking. As a case in point, Hittinger invokes Richard Hooker, an Elizabethan theologian who iterated that the "voice of nature" is but the instrument through which God imparts "whatsoever in such sort we learn." Nature, in other words, is not the seat of natural law (in spite of what Rousseau would later declare); it is but the medium through which natural law is known.

Hittinger shows that the American founding cannot be fully understood without appreciating the erstwhile influence of higher-law assumptions. Regardless of what theological doubts he may have harbored, Thomas Jefferson believed that the "Laws of Nature" must be considered in light of "Nature's God." Alexander Hamilton proclaimed that the "Sacred Rights of Mankind are ... written, as with a sunbeam, in the whole volume of human nature, by the hand of the Divinity itself, and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power."

In the religious parlance of the 19th century, "and in every legislative assembly" then convened, "the higher law," writes Hittinger, "was a familiar coin of discourse." Indeed it was invoked in

Hittinger's is not a book on the prominence of natural-law thinking in earlier centuries, however. Its focus is chiefly on the past 55 years, a period in which a disordering *Zeitgeist* has militated against the natural-law tradition and obscured its vital importance to a proper understanding of moral theology and to the making of positive laws. (According to Hittinger the Supreme Court's truckling to the disorienting spirit of the age began, in 1947, with *Everson v. Board of Education*, before which case "the First Amendment's prohibition of 'an establishment of religion' applied only to laws passed by the U. S. Congress.") What Hittinger makes positively clear is that (except in the case of Pope John Paul II's encyclical *Veritatis Splendor*) the idea of natural law has been so irresponsibly misappropriated in recent history by unqualified interpreters and ethical relativists that it has become virtually impossible to advert unambiguously to what the 30 bishops at Arles acknowledged as God's first gift to man.

To exemplify the corruption of natural-law thought as a basis for a coherent public philosophy, Hittinger recalls the Senate hearings on the nomination of Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court. On this unprecedented occasion, Sen. Joseph Biden (D-Del.), having been apprised of Judge Thomas's extensive

IN THE RELIGIOUS PARLANCE OF THE 19TH CENTURY, "AND IN EVERY LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY" THEN CONVENED, "THE HIGHER LAW," WRITES HITTINGER, "WAS A FAMILIAR COIN OF DISCOURSE."

debates over slavery, especially in the wake of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. That the United States had placed above themselves a "higher law," that they had not subordinated moral principles to human desires, that they made of government neither a facilitator of individual caprice nor a final arbiter of the good, were reasons to "boast," said the ever sapient Orestes Brownson.

writings on natural law, insisted that the Judiciary Committee determine whether the judge espoused a "good" or "bad" theory of natural law. In Biden's words, a bad theory of natural law would espouse "a code of behavior ... suggesting that natural law dictates morality to us, instead of leaving matters to individual choice." A good theory, Biden argued, would defend the rights of individuals to

make their own decisions regarding, in particular, sexual conduct and abortion.

Senator Biden's is a theologico-political problem that, in their "state of nature" scenarios, the Enlightenment thinkers solved by imagining men to be

Moreover, although the Fourteenth Amendment does not say precisely what constitutes "liberty," the prevailing opinion defined it broadly so as to include "the right to define one's own concept of existence, or meaning, of the universe,

place of natural-law considerations in the ordering of public life. America, which is fast elevating self-interest above all else and making the judiciary the final authority of right and wrong, ignores Hittinger at her peril. What Sophocles said on the Aegean nearly 2,500 years ago is relevant to our post-Christian world: "Haughtiness and the high hand of disdain / Tempt and outrage God's holy law; / And any mortal who dares hold / No immortal Power in awe / Will be caught up in a net of pain; / The price for which his levity is sold." ■

IN BIDEN'S WORDS, A **BAD THEORY OF NATURAL LAW** WOULD ESPOUSE "A CODE OF BEHAVIOR ... SUGGESTING THAT **NATURAL LAW DICTATES MORALITY** TO US, INSTEAD OF LEAVING MATTERS TO **INDIVIDUAL CHOICE**."

subject to no authority other than individual intelligences. Sundry authorities around which societies organize themselves are seen by Hobbes and Locke to derive, as Hittinger reminds us, not from God but from "covenants of individuals constrained to reach a consensus on the basis of what is (or seems) self-evident." The "state of nature" myth, or what Hittinger calls "a secular substitute of Genesis," would sever all connections between the positive law of man and the positive law of God. The difficult notion that remains a stumbling block for a mind like Senator Biden's is impeccably expressed in a sentence Hittinger quotes from the 12th-century summist Johannes Faventinus: "The streams of natural rectitude flow into a sea of natural law, such that what was lost in the first man is regained in the Mosaic law, perfected in the Gospels, and decorated in human customs."

Senator Biden's resistance to law from highest heaven handed down is symptomatic of two larger concerns: the elevation of the individual to the status of a sovereign and the question of legitimacy in the courts. These two issues come to a head in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, a watershed case to which Hittinger returns in chapter after chapter. While *Roe v. Wade* gave women the right to determine the fate of the unborn, *Casey* went much further in removing the trimester scheme. In the language of the opinion that prevailed in the latter case, the state may impose no "undue burden" on a woman's choice to abort.

and of the mystery of human life."

There is not room enough here to rehearse what Hittinger sees as the many and troubling implications of this bizarre definition. The connection between what was argued in *Casey* and what proponents of assisted suicide are arguing now, however, should be underscored. Hittinger illuminates the connection by revisiting a 1991 lawsuit that sought to overthrow a Washington law forbidding one from causing or aiding another to commit suicide. Chief Judge Barbara Rothstein, of the District Court for the Western District of Washington, found in favor of the plaintiffs (members of the organization Compassion in Dying), whose case rested on the claim that the Washington law violated the "due process" and "equal protection" clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment. Building her decision in large measure on the language of *Casey*, Judge Rothstein wrote, "Like the abortion decision, the decision of a terminally ill person to end his or her life 'involv[es] ... [a] choic[e] central to personal dignity and autonomy.'" It would seem, writes Hittinger, that "many Americans believe ... they have more to fear from the social contract and traditional criminal codes than they do from private decisions made by physicians, insurance companies, and families."

The First Grace deals mightily with the crisis of our time—namely, the failure of those who make, enjoy, and judge the constitutionality of laws to appreciate the dire consequences of denying the

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They Have Their Graves Afar

By Jonathan Chaves

NOT LONG AGO, during a visit to London, I happened upon a delightful bookstore on Gloucester Road in Kensington. Of course I entered and began my browsing, as always, in the poetry section. There I found a slim, black-and-yellow volume in perfect condition, *The Ballad of St. Barbara and Other Verses*, by one of my very favorite writers, G.K. Chesterton, a first edition published by Cecil Palmer in 1922. I bought it, and it now resides on my bookshelf side by side with early editions of such poets as Burns, Cowper, Bryant, and Longfellow.

I had vaguely realized that Chesterton wrote poetry, and I knew that the title of one of Russell Kirk's last books, *The Wise Men Know What Wicked Things Are Written On the Sky*, a sobering and penetrating autopsy of contemporary education in America, was in fact a line of verse by Chesterton, but only now did I come to grasp G.K.'s importance as an exemplar of a counter-tradition of poetry in the 20th century. Further reading of his complete poetry, in a cheap Wordsworth Edition paperback published in 1995 (*The Works of G.K. Chesterton*, which despite the title is limited to his poetry), confirmed this impression and deepened it.

In academia and among our cultural elites in general, it has long since been assumed that the mainstream of 20th-century poetry is modernist, eschewing rhyme, meter, and indeed all formal structure, and simultaneously fragmenting meaning itself, leading to what is by now the familiar hermetic incomprehensibility of virtually all published modern poetry. Poet Dana Gioia has long since called attention to the domination of academic writing programs by this sort

of thing (in his superb book, *Can Poetry Matter?: Essays on Poetry and American Culture*).

But even a moment's reflection reminds us that there have been great poets in the 20th century—Frost, Robinson, Hardy, Masters (in many of his fine uncollected poems), to name only a few—who used rhyme (at least in some of their work) and meter, and wrote poetry that successfully conveyed meaning transcending the mere jumble of words. What has not been done is to suggest that these figures with all their differences can now be seen as constituting a counter-revolution in poetry, that while they may not all have been “conservative” in a narrowly political sense, they were so in preserving, while creatively reinvigorating, the age-old role of poetry as conveyor of meaning in beautiful, compelling language. And Chesterton most certainly belongs among their number.

For a traditional conservative, there is with Chesterton the added attraction of ideas embedded in verse that resonate through the decades and even through the centuries. Has “deconstruction” become the chosen lens through which to view the past, for historians, literary critics, art historians, academics, and “intellectuals” across the board today? My treasured *Ballad of St. Barbara*, published in 1922, berates these debunkers, whose project of “demythologizing” the past, as Chesterton fully grasped, was well underway long before Jacques Derrida reared his head among us. “O learned men who never learned to learn,” Chesterton intones in “The Myth of Arthur,” “Save to deduce, by timid steps and small, / From towering smoke that fire can never burn / And from tall tales that men were never tall!” For G.K. knows what they do not, that “myths” and “tall tales” are fingers pointing towards a truth so enormous that it cannot be conveyed in “everyday” terms, while the intellectual class of modernity take “Immortal story for a mortal sin.” They wish to demolish all claims to transcendence, as part of their utopian project of bringing everything

down to the same level. But Chesterton ends by ironically reassuring them: “Take comfort; rest—there needs not this ado. / You shall not be a myth, I promise you.”

And beauty itself is to be debunked, the ugliness and wretchedness of the world explored and upheld as the actual truth beneath the veil of lies, a truth that itself yields ultimately to the Void that lies below. But Chesterton sees in reverse, or rather, in obverse, again countering the modern anti-vision, centric rather than eccentric, and for that very reason actually eccentric among the moderns. While alive to the impermanence of the world before us, he sees its beauty as a sign of something (or rather, Someone) Real, not false, upholding it, and he can do so because he has faith:

A wandering world of rivers,
A wavering world of trees,
If the world grow dim and dizzy
With all changes and degrees,
It is but Our Lady's mirror
Hung dreaming in its place,
Shining with only shadows
Till she wakes it with her face.

It is this faith that allows Chesterton to gaze upon the “proletarians” of the world and see not misery requiring bloody revolution to correct, but workmen of the divine. *The Ballad of St. Barbara* has poems on “The Four Guilds,” including one, “The Stone-Masons,” of particular significance for those of us who reside in Washington, D.C., home of the National Cathedral, where master Italian stonecutters have kept alive the Gothic tradition in sculpture at the very moment in history that the priests and bishops were desecrating the theological traditions inherited by the Episcopalian Church:

Our gargoyles gather the roaring
rain,
Whose yawn is more than a frozen
yell,
And their very vomiting not in vain.

For the mainstream modern writer, “vomiting” is what it is all about—

Sartre's *La Nausée*. For Chesterton, even this is part of God's creation.

Is all, then, seriousness and portentiousness in Chesterton's verse? On the contrary, even the examples cited here should show the sheer *joie de vivre* that runs through all his work, itself a scandal to the true-blue modern intellectual, who combines despairing sadness with fanatic utopian dreams. Precisely because all is sacramental, all is full of joy for G.K. But even beyond this, he is often gleeful and funny in his poetry. "The Logical Vegetarian" is the best satire ever written on the vegetarianism and even "veganism" that, decades after Chesterton's death, have become so widespread in our society:

No more the milk of cows
Shall pollute my private house
Than the milk of the wild mares of
the Barbarian;
I will stick to port and sherry,
For they are so very, very,
So very, very, very Vegetarian!

And Chesterton is prophetic in other ways. "Elegy in a Country Churchyard" laments not the unrecorded losses that weighed so heavily upon Thomas Grey, but the all-too-recorded loss of English life in futile wars away from home, the Boer War and others. Can we read this poem and not think of another futile war, fought by a nation fathered by Britain, our nation, leading to tragic deaths for which there is no justification?

The men that worked for England
They have their graves at home:
And bees and birds of England
About the cross can roam.
But they that fought for England,
Following a falling star,
Alas, alas for England
They have their graves afar.
And they that rule in England,
In stately conclave met,
Alas, alas for England
They have no graves as yet. ■

Jonathan Chaves is professor of Chinese at George Washington University.

Workshopping Around

By Anthony Gancarski

To the uninitiated or uninformed, the life of a fiction writer seems easy enough. Just a matter of drinking oneself into a stupor then finding a way to commit one's genius to paper before swallowing the barrel of a gun—so runs the traditional conception of a novelist's life. But those in the know recognize such a description as equal parts romance, lunacy, and fantasy. In 21st-century America, the road to literary stardom isn't nearly that easy.

There are two avenues open to the aspiring literary success. The first is situational: if a budding author self-identifies as a paraplegic Eskimo, a transgendered Nigerian immigrant, or the progeny of an Established Figure in the business, then his road is as smooth and uncomplicated as stock tips doled out during Fox News Channel's weekend programming. His output will find sympathetic reviews in such prestigious journals as the *New York Review of Books* or in the book-review sections of major papers like the *New York Times*. Perhaps most fortunately of all, the lucky author might be found on C-SPAN reading to a dozen wayward spirits in some Falls Church Barnes & Noble. Some may scoff at the paltry turnouts for such author events, but they should realize that in the world of "midlist" fiction such performances are cause for celebration. They indicate that the author has made it. The Book Sellers, quick to glom onto the latest hype, happily promote the new product under the aegis of Supporting New Writers.

But this is not to suggest that everyone who gets published is either a legacy or a Diversity Case. The industry isn't quite that monolithic or transparent. Unknowns do get published. Even some white middle-class fiction writers find their way into the literary mix. But to do so, they have to pay certain dues.

Nearly without exception, they punch their tickets by attending a "creative writing" program at one institution or another. In taking such a step, the aspiring student hopes that he will emerge with a contract for publication or, at the very least, an agent.

Not every would-be wordsmith has the bank account or the credit rating necessary for such an ambitious undertaking as an MFA in Creative Writing. Luckily for the paupers, however, half-measures are afforded to them. Many schools with prestigious names host summer "seminars" that last for two or three weeks. At these events, even the greenest of novice writers is worthy of feedback from some of the biggest names in the industry. As the invariably tasteful pamphlets suggest, how could a beginner do anything but benefit from studying with a David Foster Wallace, a Barry Hannah, or a Jill McCorkle? Careers have been launched with far less. Especially considering the talent possessed by (Your Name Here), how could anyone reasonably expect anything but success with such able mentors?

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People do emerge from these summer workshops with book deals. Michael Cahill, author of 1998's *A Nixon Man*, bluntly said while attending the 1996 Bennington Writing Seminars that he was "making the circuit to get a deal." And a deal he got—his book was released by St. Martin's less than two years after his stint at summer workshops. But Michael Cahill is not a typical summer-workshop denizen.

Ordinarily, the students in a summer workshop don't think in such clear, concrete terms. Why would they? Do people who take Carnival cruises expect them to turn out as smoothly as plots on "The Love Boat"? Do middle-aged men at baseball camp expect to be invited to try out for the Devil Rays or Pirates? Of course not! Such thinking would be foolish and would run counter to the actual function of a summer writing workshop—that of a fantasy camp for fiction hacks.

At a well-run summer writing program, there are ample diversions to distract those in attendance from the marginal quality of their work. At the most "legendary" of the summer programs, there is a tradition of holding student readings a few times a week. Held in the afternoon in the dead space between classes and communal cafeteria dinners, these events feature spectacles like blue-haired women spinning extended gynocentric metaphors and

tightlipped men reading about "the war." Good times for all!

The draw of the fiction workshop, despite such diversions, is not the "community of writers," but fleeting interactions with literary figures. The best of the summer conferences often will bring in a few junior "literary agents" (read: the twentysomethings who fetch coffee and slippers for the older folks in the office). Those who enjoy spectacles like train wrecks could do worse than to watch these hapless, harried gatekeepers descended upon by worthies with manuscripts at the ready, in the manner

script, much less to cover the blank space on the pages with scribbled sweet nothings like the following cramped notation from the author of *The Ice Storm*: "unfortunately, the manuscript, while holding closely to the convention of the unsympathetic narrator, breaches both letter and spirit of the convention." Such experiences are not to be missed, as they are every bit as life-affirming as Hillary Clinton teaching Lamaze.

Summer Writers' Conferences are not for everyone, and having been through a couple myself (at Bennington and Skidmore last decade), I wouldn't advise

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of Alfred Hitchcock's "The Birds." After hearing the question "Do you think there's a market for my memoir of my time at the Frito-Lay plant?" a few times, these agents often wind down by readying their résumés while drinking malt liquor through straws. Or so legend has it.

The charms of the agents in attendance, however, pale compared to the opportunities "literary conference participants" have to rub elbows with legends. No amount is too much for a starry-eyed student to pay to have a Rick Moody or a Meg Wolitzer read his manu-

attending one to anybody with a trace of skepticism. That said, there are fringe benefits for even the most cynical prospective participant.

For single men, or those who simply wish to function as if they were single, opportunities for trysts and summer flings abound. After all, no one is more on the make than a single woman sleeping alone in a dorm-room bed. A few words of advice for those going that route: pretend you don't mind the Tori Amos CD on repeat and under no circumstances should you drink more of the Boone's Farm wine (\$3.99 a gallon!) than your date.

Even for those harboring aspirations to celibacy (or those for whom celibacy is a matter of necessity rather than choice), there are inducements to recommend the summer-workshop scene. Little else compares, in terms of off-the-charts surreality, to watching a soused National Book Award winning, foundation-funded author pogo-dancing to "No Future" by the Sex Pistols. Except, perhaps, the realization that the opportunity to see such a thing costs hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars. ■

Anthony Gancarski is the author of Unfortunate Incidents: Poems and Short Stories, 1996-2000.



"Every time we successfully recover from a technical problem, the computer likes a high five."

The Scarlet “A”



An Israeli ambassador physically attacks an art display in a Stockholm exhibit linked to an international conference on genocide—a display created

by an Israeli artist, incidentally—and Sharon and his ilk denounce the exhibit as anti-Semitic. (Dror Feiler, the artist, opposes the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.) Alicia Colon, a *New York Sun* columnist, writes that while Christians enjoyed the festive New Year season with good cheer, Jewish communities were being inundated with vicious anti-Semitic vandalism. *New York* magazine runs a cover story about the return of anti-Semitism, and announces that hating Jews has become politically correct in many places. Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, calls the threat to the safety of the Jewish people “as great, if not greater, than what we faced in the thirties.” Arnold Beichman, writing in the *Washington Times*, asks if there will never be peace between Jews and the rest of the world. Finally, Israel Singer, chairman of the World Jewish Congress, levels charges against the European Union for recent decisions he has deemed anti-Semitic. What in heaven’s name is going on here?

It is an easy question to answer. The defamatory accusation of anti-Semitism is the equivalent of a ninth-inning bases-loaded home run when down 3-0 against those who charge that Israel is out of control and point out its misdeeds. If Ariel Sharon can claim anti-Semitism against a peace-loving Israeli artist living in Sweden, what is so surprising when American Jews accuse anyone criticizing Israel with the same charge? Alas, my co-editor Pat Buchanan and I are used to these labels. As are Gore Vidal, Norman Mailer, *Chronicles*, and the *Dartmouth Review*, just to name a few.

What is really going on is that the state of Israel has always exploited alle-

gations of anti-Semitism, never more than when its policies against the Palestinians raise the eyebrows (nothing more would be tolerated) of fair-minded people and governments throughout the world. The line is as follows: no matter what Israel does—withdraws from the occupied territories, dismantles the settlements, and recognizes the rights of the Palestinians—the Arabs will never be satisfied until they drive the Jews into the sea. Well, it’s a good line, but it’s a big lie, as big as the one used by individuals like David Frum when he calls conservatives who did not support the war against Iraq purveyors of treason. In fact, if Israel gives up the illegal settlements and the occupied territories, it

Israel’s decision to murder the elected Palestinian leader, it means that except for the U.S., Micronesia and Marshall Islands, all other countries on the globe are anti-Semitic. Even when a pregnant Palestinian woman is stopped at an Israeli checkpoint and gives birth in an open field, the only lesson to be learned is that *Ha’aretz* journalist Gideon Levy—who reported two such cases [recently], one in which the baby died—is an anti-Semite.”

As I wrote in my last column, much has been made by professional wolf-criers of European anti-Semitism. Jews across Europe are reported to be afraid for the first time since the Holocaust. Yes, if a Jew wearing a yarmulke walks in St. Denis, a Paris working-class suburb where the fuzz fears to tread because of militant Islamists, he will be attacked by unemployed Arab youths, perhaps even murdered. The truth, however, is that if I

IF ARIEL SHARON CAN CLAIM **ANTI-SEMITISM** AGAINST A PEACE-LOVING ISRAELI ARTIST LIVING IN SWEDEN, WHAT IS SO SURPRISING WHEN **AMERICAN JEWS** ACCUSE ANYONE CRITICIZING ISRAEL WITH THE SAME CHARGE?

will still be despised by many Arabs, but it will not only hold the high ground, it will enjoy the support and admiration of every democracy.

Neoconservatives, or neo-Jacobins, as Claes G. Ryn correctly identified them in these pages, are as much to blame for abusing “anti-Semitism” as are Israeli hardliners like Sharon, Netanyahu, and American-born settlers. Nothing will satisfy these people until they’ve driven the Palestinians into Jordan.

As journalist Ran HaCohen has written, “When a Palestinian kills innocent Israeli civilians, it’s anti-Semitism. When Palestinians attack soldiers of Israel’s occupation army in their own village, it’s anti-Semitism. When the UN General Assembly votes 133 to 4 condemning

walk there wearing my cross, I, too, will be attacked, perhaps even murdered. And Greece is not occupying any Arab lands, nor does it have any illegal settlements. Does this make the French anti-Semites? Of course not, but you’d never know it by reading the “patriotic” press. Are the Dutch, for the comments of a European Bank chairman’s wife, or the Norwegians, for the words of a Marxist former government minister? It ain’t necessarily so.

As Thomas Friedman wrote, “The Jewish state is in peril ... the withdrawal should be done unilaterally. This can’t happen too soon, and the United States should be forcing it.” Instead, the neo-cons are charging true friends of peace in the Middle East with anti-Semitism. ■